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PETER

THE FISHERMAN PHILOSOPHER

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A Study in Higher Fundamentalism

by

JOHN MURDOCH MacINNIS
PH.D., D.LITT.

1930

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PETER
THE · FISHERMAN · PHILOSOPHER

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To her who has shared with me the trials and victories of the last thirty years this book is affectionately dedicated

INTRODUCTION

The personality of Simon Peter has had a remarkable fascination for me for many years. I have studied it with interest and carefulness. In my spoken words, and in my written, I have claimed that he was a great elemental human, in whom the essential things of personality were all present in a remarkable degree. A study of his letters has greatly impressed me with his intellectual strength. This conviction was strengthened when a few years ago my friend, the Rev. Samuel Chadwick, said, in an address he gave at a Bible Conference in Athens, Georgia, "All the great scientific definitions of faith are found in Peter's letters, rather than those of Paul." This preamble will reveal the satisfaction which came to me when my friend, Dr. John MacInnis, gave me the privilege of reading this book in manuscript form.

Herein the author has demonstrated beyond the possibility of denial the clear and consistent philosophic thinking of Peter. The fact that in his letters there is no attempt at a systematic statement, adds enormously to the value of the revelation. He wrote artlessly, naturally and always with the one purpose in view of strengthening his brethren; but his whole method was evidently the result of a clear and consistent outlook

upon life and history as a whole, that is, of a positive philosophy.

This Dr. MacInnis has set before his readers in language understandable of the simplest mind. From the standpoint of intellectual interest, the book is a real delight; but its greatest value is that it will help many, who are bewildered by the conflict and controversies of the days in which we live, to clear thinking upon the really fundamental things of our faith and life. I am convinced that much of the confusion of today results from the fact that so many, to quote Hutton of *The Spectator*, forty years ago, "only squint at life." It is great to see the whole. This Peter did, and this Dr. MacInnis helps us to do, in his interpretation of "Peter the Fisherman Philosopher."

G. Campbell Morgan.

PREFACE

The following studies had their origin in a philosophical seminar in which men representing some of the leading universities of the East, as well as some of the universities of Europe, discussed two questions: First, why the collapse of civilization represented by the World War; second, what is necessary to the building up of an effective and abiding society? While all kinds of explanations and philosophies were presented and discussed at some length, it occurred to the author to do two things:

First: To bring the Christian view of God and the world to the test of this consideration and seek to understand what it had to offer at every point of the discussion both on the explanation of the failure and on the question of a sound philosophy of life that would make for effectiveness and permanence.

Second: Realizing that the most of the people who make up society are plain men and women and not trained philosophers, we wanted to take over the essential considerations and conclusions of these technical discussions into the world of the common man and recast them in his language. While considering these questions we happened to be giving special attention to Peter's speeches and epistles and it dawned on us that

they contained a most comprehensive philosophy expressed in the language of the common people. Out of this grew the form of the present book.

We do not try to cover all that we believe in these simple studies. Our intention is to indicate in a simple way that Peter's insights include a most comprehensive view of God and our world and can stand the test of the most searching thinking of our day.

The use of quotations from authors and books with which we quite radically differ on questions of theology does not mean an approval of these books. Every quotation is used for a certain purpose which is definitely indicated in the use of it. The use of quotations from people who radically differ from us in our convictions is justified by the Apostle Paul, who used a line from a hymn to a false god without offering any apology for doing so; neither did he feel under necessity to protest against the rest of the hymn or say anything about the author from whom he quoted.

We have tried to indicate our indebtedness to others by a consistent use of quotation marks, but in addition we wish to express at this time our sincere gratitude to all who have in any way helped in the thinking or preparation of these simple pages. We especially express our appreciation to those who have been kind enough to read the manuscript and make helpful suggestions, as well as to those who have taken pains in preparing it for the press.

JOHN MURDOCH MACINNIS.

FOREWORD

When this little book was first published it caused quite a commotion among a certain group, and no one could be more surprised at the outcome than the writer of the book. A few of the outstanding leaders of the group, self-appointed guardians of "the faith which was once for all delivered," pronounced it untrue to "the Faith" and straightway demanded that the author should resign the Deanship of the institution of which, at the time, he was the chief executive, and that the book should be suppressed. A still greater surprise came when, under the pressure brought to bear upon them by this coterie, the board of directors of the institution, by a bare majority, changed their previously expressed and published convictions, and accepted the Dean's resignation, and later officially ordered the original plates and remaining copies of the book to be destroyed.

In the light of this unusual procedure in this day of Christian tolerance, the writer went over the book with great care and in the light of the open New Testament, with the result that he is sincerely convinced that, when read from the point of view clearly stated in the Preface, there is nothing in the book that is either disloyal to Christ, or that denies the evangelical faith.

At the earnest request of many friends, who kindly say that they have been helped by the book, he has consented to have it republished.

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PETER

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CHAPTER I

A Great Teacher Discovered

The Higher Fundamentalism is that insight of a living experience which is the light of life. It does not ignore or set aside doctrine. On the contrary, it grows out of a sound doctrine, making possible true insights which provide a genuine and adequate philosophy of life. An adequate philosophy or interpretation of life is the explanation that most satisfactorily solves the problems which life itself presents and makes possible the truest and highest kind of living.

One of the most illuminating illustrations of what we mean by this higher fundamentalism is given to us in the experience in which Peter was recognized by Christ as an interpreter and teacher with authority. This experience makes possible the building of the church and challenges a most serious consideration.

The record of this recognition is found in Matthew 16:13-20 and is one of the most interesting and important insights in the New Testament.

Jesus had made a very deep impression upon the men of His day and they were trying to interpret and estimate Him. He evidently was conscious of this fact and came to realize that His disciples were also struggling with the question. In order to help them to come to a decision

He took them aside to a quiet place and gave them an opportunity to crystallize their thought on the subject.

First of all He asked them what men in general had to say about Him. They said, "Some say John the Baptist; some Elijah; and others Jeremiah or one of the Prophets." The answers varied, but still they covered but a comparatively limited range of thought. The men of His day clearly saw that Jesus was not an ordinary man, and they tried to account for Him by saying that He was one of the great prophets come back from the dead. The important thing is that they recognized that He was more than ordinary and they made definite attempts at explaining His life and power.

In the second place Jesus asked the disciples to state what they thought about the subject. Peter answered for the group and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Our concern at this time is not with the exact meaning and significance of this answer, but with the response of Jesus. If this were the place to take it up I think we could show that the answer involves a very comprehensive conception of the Person of Christ—a conception which makes Him more than mere man. But whatever Jesus and Peter understood it to mean Jesus recognized it as a real insight and put a very definite responsibility upon Peter as a result of this experience. He also laid bare the source of this insight. He said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." Whatever may be said concerning the method by which this insight was given there can be no

reasonable doubt that Jesus wanted Peter to understand that it did not come in the ordinary processes of reasoning. There was something in the experience of Peter that put him in an attitude that made possible an understanding that he could not get in the ordinary way. That does not mean that it was suprarational. Anything that God showed to Peter must have been through the reason—there was no other way to approach his personality. But it is clear that Peter had an experience in which he related himself to God so as to make it possible for God to show him what he could not find in the ordinary ways of thinking represented by the phrase "Flesh and blood." Let me state this philosophically. Peter related himself to the final source of stimulus in such a way as to make it possible for him to be stimulated to thoughts that he could not think apart from that special stimulus. That means that Peter had a special experience of reality that made possible this exceptional insight. Jesus calls the final source of stimulus "My Father who is in heaven." Peter had an experience of God which made possible a worthy appreciation of the person and message of Jesus. This meant a personality so related to God that it could experience and interpret the truth represented by Jesus Christ. In other words, Jesus led this man on into such an experience of God as made it possible for God to stimulate him to right thinking and to a true appreciation of the reality.

At this point we are given the key to the interpretation of the difficult passages which follow. The trouble with

the majority of the interpretations of these passages given by the different schools comes from the fact that the writers seem to ignore this key which is hung at the door. Jesus sought to interpret God and reality to the world. In order to do that He must have a body through which He can make that interpretation. It must be more extensive than the one He was then using for He complained that He was straitened in that body (Luke 12:50). On what kind of a foundation could He build a body that would be a fit instrument for the interpretation of reality? In the very nature of things it must be founded in experience. It would be impossible to interpret reality through a detached instrument. That means that it can not be founded on a mere confession. That does away with one line of interpretation of the rock on which Christ was to found the church. Neither can it be founded on a detached personality. The church is an association of personalities. That does away with another line of interpretation. In fact the most of the interpretations offered would come under one or the other of these.

Jesus recognized the genuineness of Peter's experience of God and immediately declared that on such an experience He could build His church and make it effective. Not on Peter, nor on Peter's confession, but on that experience of God which interpreted the life and thought of God. The church is the body raised up by Christ to reflect and interpret God in the world—to understand and live the life that He was living, there-

fore, it can not be built on tradition or on mere ritual. It must have as its rock foundation an *immediate* and *constant* experience of God. This does not contradict the fact that Christ is the chief corner stone in this foundation. Without Him there could be no building experience. It is only necessary to review history in the most general way to see how wonderfully this fact is illustrated by it. The building days of the church have been the times when men have experienced God in a new and vital way. The days of failure and decay have been the days when men drifted from reality and depended upon tradition and form.

The thing that made possible the building and rapid growth of the church in the apostolic days was the new and vital experience of God which came to the disciples through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This also was the thing that made it invincible. It is the thing that made its witness a witness of power. The men were talking about something they were experiencing. It was something vitally and vastly more than just repeating something that had been told them by someone else. They did tell what Jesus began both to do and to say but they told it after they had experienced it in their own lives. As the church got away from that immediate and vital experiencing of God it became formal and a mere retailer of tradition. These traditions were the story of a true experience but it was the experience of a generation of men and women that were dead and gone. As a result of this kind of life and testimony the glow

and power went out of the church and Christ could not build it nor make it invincible. Its councils became darkened and its influence in the world anything but what Christ had intended it to be. The awakening of the Reformation was the rediscovery of a forgotten and neglected doctrine; but it was more than that. Fundamentally it was an immediate and vital experience of God and in the measure in which the church entered into this new and unique experience of God it got a new glow of life and a new note of authority. This same thing is illustrated in every genuine awakening of religion in the history of the church and could be illustrated at length. The thing we are interested in now is to point out that this immediate and vital experience of God by human personalities has always been the rock upon which the church has been built and the thing that makes it invincible and gives it the insight that makes possible the note of authority in its teaching. The experience did not create the doctrine but it did make it living for the men of that particular age and made them witnesses with life and power.

As a result of this experience and insight Jesus recognized Peter as a teacher with authority. He said to him, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Not the keys of heaven—which is a vitally different thing. The kingdom of heaven was what Jesus came to proclaim and introduce. The symbol of the keys was quite familiar to the Jews. They understood that they were the symbol of authority in teaching. Jesus

recognized Peter as a teacher with authority to interpret the kingdom of heaven. As a result of this recognition, which was not arbitrarily given but based upon experience, Peter was the one who interpreted the meaning of what Jesus was and did on the day of Pentecost. He was also the one who interpreted the meaning of these things to the Gentiles when the Gospel was first preached to them. There again we are face to face with a fundamental principle.

The teacher with authority is the man with a living experience. Peter could understand the meaning and significance of what was happening in the crisis in which he lived because he was in living and vital touch with God. The keys of authority in teaching can not be arbitrarily or formally passed down from one generation to another. They must come as the result of a vital experience. Neither a "sheepskin" nor "the laying on of hands" can make a teacher with power. This comes only through travail of soul. Institutions may recognize this thing when it is acquired through training and living but they can not bestow it by rule.

It did not come to Peter apart from his experience and training but as a result of them. Jesus, who was the greatest of all students of men, recognized this development and possibility in Peter and appointed him as a teacher with authority. When he entered upon his work we know that he bound and loosed and his judgments met with the favor of heaven. He interpreted the experience of Pentecost and his insight has been an

authority through the centuries. He loosed men from the traditions that would keep the Gentiles from sharing the blessing of the Gospel and his interpretation was sealed by the power of God touching and transforming the lives of those who responded to his interpretation. This it seems to me is the natural and historical interpretation of these words that have been the storm center of a controversy that has continued for centuries. Our purpose at this time does not require us to enter into a consideration of this controversy. We have simply touched upon this extremely interesting and illuminating incident for the purpose of calling attention to the fact that Christ recognized Peter as a man of more than usual insight, and that that recognition was justified by subsequent events.

In doing this He simply recognized a fundamental principle that holds good in all time. The teacher with the keys in our day is the man who is in vital touch with reality and is interpreting life in the light of a living experience of God. The things concerning which he speaks with authority are the things that he is experiencing. The fact that he has a vital experience along one line does not necessarily mean that he is an authority in all lines. Yet it is true that the measure of his authority will be determined by his experience and insight.

I think enough has been said to arouse our interest in this man and to justify our turning to his speeches and letters for the purpose of testing out this principle of fundamental insight as the source of fundamentalism

that answers the great questions pressed upon us by life and its problems. But before doing this we will briefly consider the importance of clear thinking regarding life and its issues and give additional reasons why Peter is chosen as our interpreter at this time.

CHAPTER II

The Importance of Right Thinking

Philosophy, which is the name given to men's endeavor to understand and explain life, has fallen upon evil days and has been shamefully neglected, with disastrous results, through a fatal misunderstanding of its nature and value.

In its simplest and most comprehensive definition philosophy is an endeavor to intelligently explain experience. It is impossible to conceive of a man, who has his reason, not making some kind of an attempt to explain his experience. To live at all is to have an experience. To have an experience is in the very nature of a rational life to make an endeavor to explain it. To consciously say that you will not explain it is to take a definite attitude toward it that involves interpretation, and interpretation is philosophy. It may not be logical and scientific and not recognized in the technical sense, but nevertheless it is a philosophy.

Therefore, every man has a philosophy and it is simply a question of the kind of philosophy he has. This question is practical and of fundamental value. An old writer said, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." In other words, the thing that a man believes is the thing that he has really thought, and what he actually thinks is the

thing that he lives. It is not necessary to go far afield for illustrations of this fact in our day. The world is still quivering and quaking under the shock of one of the most striking demonstrations of it that history affords. When men read the expositions of the military philosophy of state given by the leaders of thought in the German State the last twenty-five years they smiled and looked upon it as mere play of thought that would never affect the world. But the fact is that these men lived what they believed, and lived it to the sorrow of the whole world. As they thought in their hearts so have they been. What is true of them is true of every man. We live what we think and never beyond what we think. I use this statement in a general way as it applies to practical life. Men do not live beyond their ideals. They often come short of them, but they never go beyond them. In the light of these facts our thinking and philosophy must be viewed as of superlative value.

It is very popular today to say, "It is not what a man believes that matters, but what a man lives." The time has come when men must realize with a new sense of responsibility that it is impossible to separate a man's real thinking and living. If we are going to change men and our world we must change their thinking. What is going to happen in this far reaching crisis in the history of the world depends on the philosophy of the leaders of thought and the attitude that men are going to take toward our new world as a result of this thinking. There can be no reasonable doubt about this. When

we succeed in changing men's thoughts they soon find a way to change their world. That is why Christ began His work by challenging men to "repent," which literally means "change your mind." He could never start His great kingdom program until He could find men that were willing to change their philosophy. The disciples never began to live their great life until they began to think in a new way of their world. As Jesus, by His life, teachings, death and resurrection, forced these humble men of Galilee to think of God in new terms He laid a foundation for a new civilization. This new thought was their attempt to put into words a new experience. As it proved to be one of the most potent factors in the remaking of the world it is very much worth our while to endeavor intelligently to understand the thinking of the man who was unquestionably the leader among that little band of plain men and interpreters.

Peter was peculiarly fitted for this task and Jesus made no mistake in recognizing him.

First, he was of the common people. He was born and brought up among the fisher folk of Galilee. He saw and experienced life from the common man's point of view. He learned things in the way that the rank and file of men have learned the great lessons of life. He used their language and was familiar with its significance. He knew what it meant to the ordinary man on the street and in the church. His speeches were delivered and reported in that language. His letters also were written in that language. It is of the very greatest

importance that we should constantly keep this in mind. He was not a classical scholar and he did not use the scholar's vocabulary. He was not a technically trained philosopher or theologian and he did not use technical terms and phrases. This, however, does not mean that he was not capable of interpreting his experience. He said in the common people's way the thing he wanted to say, and he was able to say it so as to make them understand what he meant. The thing that is important to remember in this connection is that if we would understand him we must recognize that he spoke and wrote, not as a trained philosopher, but as a common man using ordinary, common sense language to express his experience of reality.

The fact that he was not trained in the schools and that he did not use the language of the scholars does not necessarily mean that he did not have a true and rich experience nor that he was not thoughtful and intelligent. On the contrary we have every reason to believe that he was an unusually thoughtful man and that he had an open, sympathetic mind and was capable of sustained reasoning. We must not forget that while it is very true that he was only an ordinary fisherman he was familiar with and well versed in one of the richest and truest literatures and religious conceptions of his day. He knew the Old Testament Scriptures with all the riches of their prophetic and poetic lore. This meant much in the way of a working philosophy. While it was not the thing that gave him his final philosophy, it was

the mine from which he got the most of the ideas and symbols which he used in expressing his experience of reality. The thing that I am particularly interested in at this point is that a man who had a fairly intimate knowledge of these great classics could not help but be fairly thoughtful. They would lead him to think deeply about his world and its meanings. The fact that he did not do this in a scientific way does not preclude the idea that it trained him to think in a connected and more or less comprehensive way. I can very well remember characters among the Highland Scotch people, among whom I was brought up as a boy, who never had the opportunity of attending school, who were very thoughtful and in some instances they were profound. They knew the Scriptures, the Westminster Confession of Faith, "Pilgrim's Progress," "Baxter's Saints' Rest" and Robert Burns' Poems. They committed great sections of these treasures to memory and these supplied the symbols with which their minds played and the imagery with which they interpreted their experiences, which in many cases were very rich and real. Their interpretations were wholly from the common people's point of view but that does not mean that they were not thoughtful and frequently profound. Peter undoubtedly was one of the very finest of this type of people. This undoubtedly is one reason why Jesus chose him to be with Him and after years of teaching sent him to preach and interpret His great message of life and freedom.

Second, he came into intimate touch with and lived

in sympathetic obedience to the greatest personality of all history. Not only did he see the flowering out of life in its highest and fullest expression in Jesus, but he sat at His feet and was taught by Him for nearly three years. That is about the length of time that students for the ministry attend a divinity school. Unconsciously he cast all his thinking into the mold suggested by the teachings of this greatest of all teachers. It would be impossible for a man of his type to spend three years in the company of Jesus and not be profoundly influenced by Him. That meant new and profound revelations—glimpses that he may not have been able to follow out in a logical way but that were fundamental and true as far as they went.

The most interesting thing about this association, however, is the fact that it led to a profound understanding of this outstanding personality. An insight into this life means an insight into the highest and most complex expression of life known to history. This is the point at which we see deepest into the nature and meaning of our world. At no other point can we get so near to the heart of the universe. Here the veil is turned aside a little more than in any other expression of reality known to history. For three years he gazed into this unveiling of the heart of the world, and in the speech of the common people he tells us what he saw and experienced. We must not underestimate the importance of this experience in the framing of a working philosophy. The value of it is very much enhanced when we remember that his

interpretations of this personality met with the approval of Jesus Himself.

Charles G. Washburn has written an intimate biography of Theodore Roosevelt in which he undertakes to give "the logic of his career." Mr. Roosevelt consented to the publication of a letter to Mr. Washburn in which he approves of his interpretations of his motives and expresses the hope that the book may be the book that his grandchildren shall read. This fact gives the book and its interpretation added value. In like manner Dr. Henry Van Dyke's interpretation of Tennyson's "Idylls of the King" has been a standard for years because it is well known that it met the approval of Lord Tennyson as one of the very best interpretations published up to the time of his death. Here is a most interesting instance of that same thing. Peter gave a wonderful statement of what he and his fellow disciples thought of Jesus, and Jesus not only approved of the interpretation but told him how he came to get the insight and made that experience the basis upon which to build an instrument for the interpretation of the thing for which He stood. He also recognized Peter as an interpreter with real authority. This authority was not arbitrarily thrust upon him as a gift, but came as a result of experience and insight.

CHAPTER III

The Heart of Our World

In our study of this plain man's philosophy let us follow Plato's advice when he said, "Let us begin, then, by asking whether all this which they call the universe is left to the guidance of an irrational and random chance, or, on the contrary, as our fathers declared, is ordered and governed by a marvelous intelligence and wisdom." This is the logical place to begin. Every man's philosophy is largely determined by his idea of the ultimate reality. Peter was no exception in this respect. It would be easy to show that his idea of God determined the form in which his ideas of life and his world were expressed. But we shall not take the time to do that at this point, because it will become increasingly plain as we pursue a study of his teachings.

We shall first seek to find his idea of God and then inquire as to whether it can meet the common man's need for a working philosophy.

The first great insight we get into Peter's idea of God is in that wonderful confession which we have already considered. It is all the more important because it was not given as a conscious definition of God. That is not the thing that was in his mind. He was thinking of Jesus and endeavoring to interpret His personality. In

doing so he spoke of Him as "The Son of the living God." This term "living God" was more than an incidental formal phrase. It shows that Peter's God was more than a mere creedal God. This idea consistently dominates his thought. To Him God was a living reality. The significance of this is brought out in that memorable conversation which Mr. Froude had with Thomas Carlyle during the last days of his life here. "I once said to him," says Mr. Froude, "not long before his death, that I could only believe in a God which did something. With a cry of pain which I shall never forget, he said, 'He does nothing.'"

It makes all the difference in the world to the philosopher or the practical man as to whether his God is a living God who does something, or a God who does nothing. Peter's God was the kind of God the great historian demanded, and the kind of God that the breaking heart of the gruff Scotch writer yearned for—a living God.

Second: He not only thought of Him as living but also as the Father of Jesus Christ and as the Father of men (1 Peter 1:17). This idea of God must have come to him through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. He noticed that when Jesus prayed He nearly always approached God as Father. In these experiences he must have been impressed with the reality, significance and beauty of this relationship. In the light of them it must have been very much easier for him to appreciate the significance and deep meanings of what Jesus told them

about God as the Father and His care for His children. As Peter came to understand and use that term it could not possibly be applied to one who was separated from and indifferent to His children. Therefore he came to have a very definite idea of

Third: God as active in His world and in the lives of His children and in their behalf. According to his speech on the day of Pentecost Peter understood God as active in speaking to the prophets and in working and speaking in the life and activities of Jesus of Nazareth. It was God who raised Him up and loosed the pangs of death and made Him both Lord and Christ. He also looked upon the unusual experiences through which they were passing in the Pentecost crisis as the activities of God in their lives (Acts 2:14-36). This same thought is prominently brought out in his speech to the Jewish people at Jerusalem on the occasion of the healing of the lame man. If anything it is made more definite than in the Pentecost speech. Take these words for example, —"The things which God fore-showed by the mouth of all the prophets . . . . He thus fulfilled" (Acts 3:18).

All these activities involved knowledge, plan and purpose. This activity was not in the past alone but also had to do with "the living present" and looked toward the future. He pled with the people to repent and do certain things that would make it possible for God to send seasons of refreshing from His presence, and that He might send Christ unto the appointed time of restoration spoken of by God through the prophets. God

in His active purpose is inseparably associated with all the interests of His people (Acts 3).

This activity was not concerned with the Jews alone but also with the Gentiles (Acts 10). In this story we have the record of one of the greatest insights that ever came to Peter, in his thought of God, and is full of the thought of an imminent, active and purposeful God. According to his letters, God begets men into a "living hope" and brings them unto an inheritance and graciously guards them through faith (1 Peter 1:3-4).

Fourth: This is not a general care in which the individual is lost in the mass but a care which extends to the details of each life. "His eyes are upon the righteous and His ears unto their supplications" (1 Peter 3:12). This is quoted from one of the psalms, but was filled with new meanings through the life and teachings of Christ. Indeed in some passages the thought seems to imply an intimate fellowship and companionship. He speaks of the people as "a people for God's own possession." The Greek word here translated "possession" has in it the idea of acquiring for possession as a tenant might take possession of a house. (Literally to make around one's self.) It seems to me that whatever the exact thought in the mind of Peter may have been it involved a very close and intimate fellowship with God.

Included in God's care for His own was the power to protect and guard them (1 Peter 1:5). Peter looked upon God as being able to do what was necessary to protect His people and to accomplish all His purpose

concerning them. In doing this He shall bring men to judgment and judge them without respect of persons (1 Peter 1:17). There is nothing arbitrary or unjust about His activity. He has not only the will but also the power to be just and to do justly.

This sufficiently brings before us Peter's idea of God. We cannot help but feel that while it is very simply stated and childlike in its attitude it is at the same time sublimely comprehensive.

Dr. Ellingworth says, "Every religion implies a particular view of God's relation to the world, and has therefore a philosophy behind it." Peter's view of God's relation to the world is very simple, but it is also very definite and comprehensive and involves a rich philosophy. Simply stated this philosophy is this: This world is the world and experience of a Person who is active in loving and caring for His creatures and in carrying out plans for their highest good. These plans are a part of the greater world of which our world is only a part. This greater world is God's activities. This is the broad outline of the philosophy which inevitably emerges from his idea of God.

Can it stand the test of modern thinking? Is it a working philosophy of life?

Sir E. Ray Lankester, in a Presidential address to the British Association for the advancement of science, quoting from Bishop Creighton, said, "Religion means the knowledge of our destiny and of the means of fulfilling it." Then he added, "We can say no more and no

less of science. Men of science seek, in all reverence, to discover the Almighty, the everlasting." In their studies Scientists, as experts, give attention to details and consider activities and are concerned with the order of events in causal association with similar events. In this way they secure for us data of the most vital importance. But in doing this it is of the greatest importance that they should not forget to "see things steadily and see them whole." It is this aspiration that is the mother of all true philosophy and bears witness to that in man which is akin to the Divine. While the scientists tell us with increasing accuracy how life behaves and what it does it is the philosopher who sees these activities as a whole and endeavors to interpret their deepest meaning.

A careful and thoughtful survey of the best philosophical thought of our day, which is based upon the most fruitful investigation and deepest insight in modern thought, leads to the conclusion that "this world with all that lies within it, is a spiritual world and the conception of a God is something to which thought and life lead up as a fact." This conclusion is reached whether we approach the subject from the physical, psychological, moral or spiritual point of view.

Dr. Orchard puts this conclusion in the following suggestive statement: "If we are going to think at all we must assume that there is a difference between the ideal and the real but also that there is something that connects and explains both. That something must obviously be higher than and prior to both, and the ground from

which they take their rise; for the lower could not explain the higher, neither does one rise logically from the other. Now this assumption that there are two worlds and that they are connected by something higher is one that is made in every act of thought, and without it we could not think at all. And it is an assumption of faith. That is to say, it is one that we are bound to make from the very constitution of our nature, and one which, without making, we can not stir a step. And what it implies is almost entirely similar to the verdict of religion, which finds the only solution of the actual world and man's aspiration in the thought of God."

In an address delivered to the medical graduates in Edinburgh University in 1905 Sir Alexander R. Simpson, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, said, "I do not know in what mood of pessimism I might have stood before you today had it not been that ere the dew of youth had dried from off me I made friends with the sinless Son of Man, who is the well-head of the stream that vitalizes all advancing civilization, and who claims to be the First and the Last, and is alive for evermore, and has the keys of death and the unseen. My experience compels me to own that claim, for, to me, ... He has established a vivid and vivifying correspondence with our supersensuous environment. He has made us 'see' that at the heart of all things there is a Father's heart. He has made us 'know' that in the complex play of circumstances the reins of progress are in the hands of a circumstant who makes all things work together for

our good." It is interesting to find that Peter in his own way and through the experience which he had with this same "Living One" was led to the same conclusion. In his own simple, plain way he said that the great central fact of the universe is a person and he called that person, "God, our Father." According to the conclusion of these students of science and philosophy there is nothing real in modern thinking that contradicts this conclusion on the part of Peter. This is a fact that can not be lightly passed over. The plain fisherman of the first century and the accomplished scientist of the twentieth century each in his own way finds that at the heart of all things there is a Father's heart. So far as methods of thought are concerned they had comparatively little in common. But when it came to the experience of reality there was that in each of them that responded to intelligence, personality and fatherliness. However different in the processes of reasoning by which they came to this experience, in the experience they touched the deepest and truest things in life and they had to use practically the same ideas and language to express it. The most real and truest things in life seek the simplest and most universal ideas and language to express themselves. This simplicity, however, is the simplicity of reality of experience and comprehensiveness. It is difficult to get beyond the things that are essential in them. We could not find a better illustration of that than the subject we are now considering. Not only did Peter come to realize that the central fact of the universe is a person but he

came to have a startlingly comprehensive conception of that person and His relation to His world. Indeed, we can reasonably question as to whether the keenest insights of our day go beyond the possible meanings of this conception. I am not going to say that all this meaning was present to his mind as he wrote. But he wrote what he, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, experienced and, being true to his experience, it is difficult to get beyond the essential outlines of that expression.

A modern theologian and philosopher has recently written a book to show that our day demands an enlarging conception of God. He contends that in order to meet the challenge of our complex life and broadened thinking our God must be a God of "power," "activity," and one who is "a companion, helper and co-worker." What Peter says about God could very easily be classed under these heads. The God whom he speaks of is active and is our helper, companion and co-worker and has power to carry out His plans. He meets the demands of the intellect for a rational universe, of the moral nature for an ethical ideal, and of the heart for a companion who has power to lead and guard. There is nothing in the life and thinking of our day that is more real than man's craving for a helper and a companion like this. A British soldier, after hearing a minister speak of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, said, "That is what I want—to feel that I have God for my chum."

That yearning is just as real and just as modern as anything we have in our thinking and is perhaps the

deepest desire of human personality. No philosophy can be said to be "a working philosophy" that does not meet the challenge of its cry.

So Peter's conception of God not only makes possible a rational and moral universe but also responds to this cry for abiding companionship and fellowship.

CHAPTER IV

A World With a Purpose

No one can have the conception of God which Peter had and not seriously think of the meaning and purpose of His world.

One of our modern thinkers says that, "if the finite world means anything to God the idea of activity and purpose are indispensable." That is the reason why the idea of purpose has a large place in all of the ordinary theological accounts of the relation of God to the world. Even Kant, in his criticism of the traditional proofs of the existence of God, while exposing the limitations of the argument from design, refers to it as "the oldest, the clearest, and that most in harmony with the common reason of mankind."

In fact we have no serious discussion of life and our world that does not recognize the importance of this subject. Peter was not an exception to the rule—his speeches and letters are full of the idea of purpose. He evidently not only faced the question but was able to come to some very definite conclusions. Professor Pringle Pattison says, "The idea of Purpose, as we meet it in experience, appears to imply desire for an as yet non-existent state of affairs, the conception of a plan for bringing the desired state of affairs into existence by the

selection of appropriate means, the act of will power, which realizes, or carries out, this plan."

A careful study of Peter's speeches and letters will show that he came to clear convictions on all of these points.

First, the desire for a new and better order. In his Pentecost and other speeches the whole point of his argument was that Jesus was the promised Messiah who was to bring in a new order of life and he pled with the men of his own nation to repent and take a different attitude toward Jesus so that this new order might be speedily realized. Then in his letters he constantly encourages men to endure trials and afflictions with patience and confidence because the conflict is to issue in a new order in which they are to be perfected, established and strengthened. That means an order in which life is to be perfectly adjusted and that adjustment made secure and permanent and backed by sufficient strength to make it possible for it to function normally. He speaks of that order as "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The great pervading passion of his writing is the desire for the realization of this new order.

Second, the plan for the bringing of the desired state of affairs into existence. This is the gospel that he preached everywhere. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ according to His great mercy begat us again unto a living hope. This hope is the hope of the new order that we desire. Men were chosen and brought into

new social relations in order that they might make possible a new world. It was "the God of all grace" who called men and granted unto them all things that pertain unto life and godliness, whereby were given exceeding great promises that through them men might become partakers of the divine nature. These were all given and made real in Jesus Christ who not only revealed but was the very heart of the plan chosen to make the new order real. In fact Peter speaks of this new world as "The eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Our present concern is simply to point out that Peter had this conception of a plan for bringing the desired state of affairs into existence. In a later chapter we shall call particular attention to details of the means selected for the realization of this new order.

Third, Peter is very clear on the subject that God has willed this new order and that He is active in carrying out His purpose. Hegel speaks of "The absolute life as the eternal play of love with itself." (Quoted by Prof. Pringle Pattison, "Idea of God" p. 340.) Peter seems to have grasped an idea of God in which His grace was the action of His love in a purpose of redemption. His writings are full of the idea of God active in the life of the world in an eternal act of willing its highest good. Even what seems like slackness concerning His promise is but His "long suffering to youward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to re-

pentance." This brings us to the heart of this question from the point of view of the common man.

Fourth, what is the purpose of God in His world? Here Peter helps us to an insight of tremendous value—an insight which for some reason, not easily understood, has been wholly overlooked by his interpreters. The central thought in his idea of God was Fatherhood. The central thought in the usual ideas of Fatherhood is love. This is the thought that has been most prominent in the modern interpretation of the subject. This idea of course is inseparable from any adequate conception of the subject, but we would venture to question as to whether it is the vital and fundamental idea of Fatherhood. God is love, therefore He is Father. Love is not the product of fatherhood, but fatherhood the product of love. Love in its essential nature is social, therefore it seeks to reproduce itself. This is the nature and essence of fatherhood. In normal life a man does not love because he is a father, but he is a father because he loves. There is no normal fatherhood that has not its basis in the passion of love.

Thomas Tiplady has a very interesting passage in his book, "The Soul of the Soldier," in which he brings out the fundamental desire in normal life to reproduce itself. He says, "The old recruiting cry, 'the young and single first' was necessary from a military standpoint but from a merely human point of view, I could not see much justice in it. The young had no responsibility, direct or indirect, for the war. They were given life and yet be-

fore they could taste it, they were called upon to die in our behalf. We who are older have tasted of life and love; the residue of our years, will be much the same as those that have gone before; there will be little of surprise or newness of experience. Perhaps, too, we have living memorials of ourselves, so that if we die, our personality and name will still live on. Our death will only be partial. While William Pitt lived could it be said that Lord Chatham had died? His body was dead, truly, but his spirit found utterance in the British House of Commons every time his son spoke." Then coming back to the young men again he says, "In dying, they gave more than themselves to death; 'Those who would have been—their sons they gave—their immortality.'"

One of our modern theologians recognizing this fundamental thing in life says, "It appears to be the very essence of life that it should be reproductive. Our living God must needs be a reproductive God."

In the light of this fact it is exceedingly interesting to discover that Peter had this very insight into the meaning of Fatherhood and applied it to God's relation to His world in a most definite way. He tells us that the precious and exceeding great promises given men by God in relation with the whole program of redemption were given in order that through them we might "become partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter 1:4.) He also understood that God is social in His nature and therefore could not show forth His life perfectly in a single individual so he tells us that God is building

up "a spiritual house, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession," that they may show forth his excellencies. (1 Peter, chapter 2.)

According to Peter the deepest meaning of our world is this, God is in it, active in creating an instrument through which He can express His life. In other words, He is active in making men and women like Himself. To oppose Him is to oppose the very nature of our universe. To fall in line with Him is to further the deepest interests of our own life as well as to render the greatest possible good to our world. This is the point at which all organizations and activities are to be brought to the final test. Are they making for righteousness? Are they making men and women like God as interpreted in Christ? If so they are moral and efficient. If not they are immoral and inefficient. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me." That means that Christ revealed to man God's thought and purpose for them and how it may be realized and to oppose Him is to oppose the very nature of the world which He revealed. Peter came to understand that through this insight and reached the above conclusion as to the meaning of this world.

How does this conclusion stand in the light of modern thought? One of our scientific theologians who appreciates the need of a "growing creed" in order to bring our religious thought abreast of the progress of science and philosophy says, "The wisdom of God will be the process by which the life of Fatherhood secures its end in creation. The holiness of God will be the moral ex-

pression of that life, and the purpose of God, satisfying the dreams of the statesman, the quests of the scientist, and the speculation of the philosopher, will be the creation of a community, one in life and love and liberty with its Father—God." This is a modern and scientific way of saying what our fisherman philosopher said when he said that God's purpose in life is to make us partakers of the divine nature and to build us up a spiritual house that He may show forth His glory.

Professor Eucken, one of the profoundest philosophers of this generation, has written a book on "The Meaning and Value of Life" and, as a result of his investigation he came to "the conviction that our life gains meaning and value only in so far as it affords a soil whereon a wider and a more cosmic life may unfold itself" (page 139). That is the philosopher's way of saying what Peter saw in his profound insight of the nature and meaning of Christ. He understood that Christ's mission was to build up this world of men into "a spiritual house" that alone could afford a soil whereon the cosmic life of God may unfold itself. The life of God requires a world of personalities for its unfolding.

Dr. W. Tudor Jones, after a searching survey of the best in modern thinking, comes to the following conclusion: "Our whole being, then, is made for God, and needs God. . . . We have tried to show that the culmination of personality is found in our union with the over-individual ideals of life and with God. That, we saw, is the very message of Christianity. Its supreme

expression was the life of its Founder. In that divine life all that was found on lower levels converged."

The following words of Professor D. S. Cairns, one of the profoundest interpreters of Christianity in our day, might well be a comment on Peter's conclusion as to the meaning of our world, but so far as I can tell Dr. Cairns did not have Peter's interpretation in mind at all. Indeed, I do not remember that he quotes him once in his interpretation of the Christian faith. Which, by the way, is another illustration of how little men have appreciated Peter as a real interpreter of life. However, here are Professor Cairns' words: "On the Christian view of the world the whole vast process of nature and of history, and of Redemption, is directed toward the making and the training of faithful souls who through death are born into that vaster life for which all things here are the preparation. Through all the travail of nature, and through all the tragedy and comedy of human life, God is making a world of spirits to whom one day He will fully communicate Himself, and who shall be united in Him, as the final Christian solution of the riddle of the world."

This is the modern expression of what Peter found to be the deepest meaning of his world as interpreted by the teachings and life and person of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER V

What Is Wrong with Our World?

In our last chapter we saw that according to Peter's philosophy the great purpose of the world is to produce men and women like God. In other words, it is a moral world that aims to produce righteous men and women. But as a matter of practical experience we know that all men are not righteous, but on the contrary all men are conscious of falling far short of what they ought to be and with this consciousness comes a sense of shame and failure.

This brings us face to face with one of the hardest, deepest and darkest problems with which the human mind has been confronted—the problem of sin and disorder in the world. If this is the world of a good God who is endeavoring to make men and women like Himself, how can we account for the failure, sorrow and discord in human experience?

Peter undoubtedly faced the question and seriously thought upon it and must have come to some kind of conclusion concerning it. Our immediate task is carefully to go over his speeches and letters to see if we can find any hints or insights that will give us a clue to his philosophy of sin.

It is evident in every part of his teachings, that he be-

lieved that there was something radically wrong with his world that ought to be put right and he seemed to assume that this involved human guilt. His whole appeal in his speeches was to men who were wrong and he pled with them to change their minds and to take a different attitude toward God as represented in Jesus Christ. In all this pleading he seems to assume that these men he is pleading with are consciously and persistently disobedient to some power that they ought to recognize and obey. In his first epistle he speaks of Christians as "children of obedience" who had purified their souls through their obedience to the truth. Over against this he speaks of those who are going wrong or being "disobedient." He also says that the men of Noah's day were wrong because they were "disobedient." From these references we can very easily see that Peter believed that the thing that was wrong in the world was caused by disobedience. This gives us a clue to his philosophy of sin that brings it in line with his conception of his world and its meaning. He believed that this world is centered in God who is active in it endeavoring to make men and women like Himself. The first and the most essential thing in a life like God's is freedom—or the power to choose. God could not make man like Himself without making him free. He would not be in His image if he were not free. Therefore man can choose the highest good or he can choose a lower good and in so doing come short of what he was intended to be.

There can be no doubt that to Peter the doing of the will of God as revealed in Jesus Christ is the highest way of life. This would have been the "ought" of his philosophy if he had worked it out in a technical way. Deliberately to refuse to choose and follow the highest we know is sin. To sin is to introduce discord into our world for it means rebellion against the will that directs it for our highest good. According to this conception sin, or the wrongness of the world, originates within the realm of will and freedom.

It involves a wrong choice and therefore incurs a sense of guilt. It is not something that must be but a something that ought not to be, and therefore a something that is contrary to man's highest good. The capacity to make a wrong choice is essential to a world like ours, but the making of the choice is not. We know that men have a sense of wrongness and this would explain why they have. If sin were merely the animal nature that we are in the process of getting rid of we would not be responsible for its presence. But if it means the making of a wrong choice on the part of moral beings it would be a strange thing if we did not have this sense of guilt.

At this point it is to be admitted frankly that much of our modern thinking leads to a very different conclusion from that involved in Peter's statements. It describes sin as simply traits of the animal life from which man is evolving. It seeks the origin of our moral ideas

from which our sense of sin arises in causes outside of the moral altogether.

"The fatal weakness in these theories is that they fail to show how the mere idea of the advantageous becomes converted into the perfectly distinct conception of the ethical ought." Any theory of sin that does not explain the element of guilt is inadequate for that unquestionably is a factor in our problem. In other words, the explanation of sin must be sought outside of the merely physical and psychical realm—it must be found in the moral and spiritual realms which involve personal relationships. This is where Peter found the explanation and this is where some of the deepest thinking of our day is leading us. This also is the reason why it is practically impossible to get the plain man to believe that he has not a power of determining himself in a way which makes his acts truly his own.

Let me call attention to three widely different utterances which indicate this drift. If the moral and spiritual are the realm in which the age must find its fundamental adjustments that must be the realm in which our world is fundamentally wrong. First I will quote from a German thinker who saw the impending collapse involved in the recent war long before the war began. His vision was much clearer then than it was during the dark tragedy. Professor Eucken says, "In the meantime, there arises, as modern man with growing consciousness has discovered, a painful situation. Men have drifted from their old moorings, and the new

ones which promised the highest happiness do not satisfy. They are conscious of poverty in the midst of an overflowing kingdom, conscious of the absence of a real substance in the midst of incessant activity, and have discovered in the midst of incessant joy and pleasure the absence of genuine happiness. Is it to be wondered at that desire and anxiety should turn again home toward the whole of life; that the question concerning the inner clarification of life should place on one side all other questions and reduce them to subsidiary facts; that the possibility of an inner elevation of human nature—of a self-maintenance in the midst of a threatening destruction of life—should become the most weighty of all concerns? And through such a revolution in the tendency and character of life, the ancient puzzles of human existence, hushed up in earliest times, raise themselves once more with crude and lively energy—problems concerning the deep darkness which veils our Whence and Whither, our dependence upon strange powers, the painful antithesis within our own soul, the stubborn barriers to our spiritual potencies, the flaws of love and righteousness, in nature and in human nature; in a word, the apparent total loss of what we dare not renounce—our best and most real treasures. But we are now experiencing what mankind has so often experienced, viz., that at the very point where the negation reaches its climax and the danger reaches the very brink of a precipice, the conviction dawns with axiomatic certainty that there lives and stirs within us something

which no obstacles or enmity can ever destroy and which signifies against all opposition a kernel of our nature that can never get lost. And if the call to us to return home to the unassailable foundation of our being is heard in no domain more powerfully than in the domain of religion, and to make what we dare not renounce our conscious possession, then the message of religion acquired a totally different meaning. Then religion appears no more as a creation of childish fancy or as a flight into some and seemingly impossible struggle for a spiritual self—for a soul and meaning of life. Consequently there arises once more, after a long period of browbeating, an aspiration after fundamental depths and inner convictions, after eternal truth and infinite love; and in the midst of all the welter of our day appears a new wave of life universal which carries men into entirely other bearings, and which is but the forerunner of a flowing tide big with the promise of a better day."

Dr. W. Tudor Jones, after reviewing the very best philosophical thought of our day, says, "The possibilities of man can be multiplied. But there is a real danger lest he should consider the development of his own spirit as something subjective and individual. We have tried to show that even on the philosophical level of interpretation there is something over-subjective and over-individual. The standards and norms of life are not man's own creation. They have their existence and meaning in the collective life of mankind. . . . Beyond the over-

individual ideals there is a source akin to these. Their cause must exist somewhere in the universe. And it is out of the presence of these standards and norms that the conception of God arises. The conception is not something that springs out of ignorance, illusion, or superstition as we have been led to believe by many writers who merely take into account the form of the conception and ignore the spiritual potentiality of man as well as the demands of thought and life."

Both of these men insist on recognizing a spiritual realm in which the deepest meanings of life are found and in which the personal relationship which is essential to Peter's idea of obedience and disobedience is made possible.

Dr. John R. Mott, in speaking of the responsibility which rests upon religious institutions at this time, says, "You will not end war and make this world a safe place by merely external arrangements. I reiterate it is not so much a matter of external arrangements and human agreements as it is of internal attitudes, motives, changes, the releasing of superhuman love and power within the lives of men that the world is to be made safe." Here is a frank recognition of the fact that the wrongness of the world has its origin in this inner realm of spiritual relationships recognized by Peter. The thing that the most profound thinkers and most practical workers of our day are coming to see and appreciate increasingly, Peter in his own plain, simple way realized. He knew that the world was wrong because free beings in it

disobeyed its highest laws, and that the most direct way to the solution of its problems was by getting men to adjust their lives in their inner relationships. He understood that inner relationship to be a relationship with God our Father. To disobey Him meant sin, while obedience would mean life and peace. While that is not a philosophical solution of the problem of evil it is a clue that is in line with the very best of our modern thinking and as the plain man's philosophy of sin is both suggestive and instructive. There can be no reasonable doubt that the conflicts and discords of our life and world are in their final nature and meanings spiritual and arise from a wrong attitude toward God. The major problem of life, therefore, is how to know God and learn His will for us and how to discover a way by which that will can be actually realized.

CHAPTER VI

Finding God's Way; or The Question of Revelation

This is a purposeful world. Its purpose is the purpose of a person who is active in carrying it out. This purpose involves free moral beings—men and women who have the power of choice, and the realization of their life depends upon falling in line with this purpose. This is what the poet had in mind when he said,

"If we would build again
And build to stay
We must find God
And go His way."

That is his way of saying that if we would live a constructive life and do permanent and abiding things we must fall in line with the essential nature of our world which is God's way of doing things. That, in the very nature of things, would involve a revelation. If the realization of life depends upon obeying laws or following a plan there must be some way of knowing these laws and this plan. We can not morally be held responsible for not doing what we can not know. We must be able to find "what may be" and then we are responsible "to make it fair" up to our means.

On the other hand, if the ultimate cause is an Intelligence who is carrying out a constructive purpose which includes the life and activities of free moral beings, He must have some way of making this purpose known to these beings. Otherwise He would be thwarted in His plans or He would have to force men into obedience, which of course would destroy free will and would be immoral.

Therefore, we are not surprised to find that Peter with his vital experience of life recognizes this fact of revelation. He has no sustained argument to prove the fact, but like the most of the subjects he deals with he assumes it and gives his own experience of it.

However, his references to the subject plainly show that he had very clear convictions which involved quite a comprehensive philosophy of revelation.

First, Peter believed that God was able to grant to men all things necessary to a life of godliness through a knowledge of Himself, and that this process involved the giving of precious and exceeding great promises.

While this statement does not deal with any theory of revelation it involves three very important things: 1. The scope of revelation would be determined by the "things that pertain to life and godliness." It would not be for the mere purpose of satisfying curiosity but to meet a fundamental need. Peter assumes that the God who is responsible for this world is able to do anything that is essential to the realization of His purpose. 2. This is granted through "the knowledge of Him," which

means a vital experience of Him. While that does not state a theory regarding the method of revelation it does exclude all merely mechanical ideas of inspiration and revelation. With this very illuminating fact before us it would seem as though it would be wholly unfair to claim Peter for any dictation theory of revelation. Whatever is to be given is to be given through a living experience of Him whereby He grants necessary promises. 3. The purpose of revelation is that men may become partakers of the divine nature and escape the tragedy of failure. This single insight could easily be made the basis of a very interesting philosophy of revelation. But without any further discussion of it we shall hold it constantly in mind as we shall proceed to note what Peter has to say about revelation.

Second, Peter believed that God actually communicated with people in such a way as to make them know and understand His plan and purpose so far as the knowing of them was necessary to their realization in the experience of men. He says the Holy Spirit spake by the mouth of David. That involved that David came to know what the mind of the Spirit was and was able to speak what He wanted to make known in the development of His purpose. Peter for himself clearly claims that God was able to let him know what was true. He showed him that he should not call any man common or unclean. In that case we know that God revealed His mind through a very interesting experience. This warns us that we are not to introduce theories of the

how of revelation into this simple, plain statement of the fact.

In his second epistle we have a statement that comes as near being a definition of the method of revelation as any we have in all the New Testament. "No prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." There are three important things involved in this interesting statement which has been the subject of much theological and philosophical discussion especially in the last two hundred years.

1. The revelation here spoken of as prophecy did not originate with "the will of man." Man was not able to think out all its contents alone. It is no mere human speculation. That does not necessarily mean that it was not in any sense the product of human thought. This part of the statement is not dealing with the subject of the method by which the prophecy came. It simply asserts that it did not originate with the human will. It must be explained by something back of the thought and will of man. I am anxious to make this clear because it is at this very point that many of the unnatural theories of revelation and inspiration that are based upon this and one or two other passages are introduced. The logic usually followed in such cases is, this message did not come by the will of man. It did not originate with him. Therefore his thinking and experience had nothing to do with it. It was a message that was simply dictated to him. If that idea is in the Scriptures it cer-

tainly is not here and should not be imposed on the subject in our endeavor to find out just what was in the mind of Peter. We are sure that it means that the message did not originate with man. This is the simple fact stated.

2. Yet the second thing we are told is that the prophecy was the result of man speaking. While it did not originate with men, yet it came through men. It was a message that was spoken by men. They "spake from God." That is they spoke conscious of the fact that they were speaking the mind of God, therefore, spoke from Him in the sense that they spoke for Him. But they had to know the mind of God before they could speak it. How could they know it without thinking and experiencing the thing that they came to know? There was no way by which they could come to know what they said save through the thinking and experience of a rational personality. Up to this point all it says is that a message which did not originate with man was spoken by men who spoke from God. There is not a word yet as to how they came to know this message. This is the subject of our next statement.

3. "Men spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit." This means literally that they were borne along by the Holy Spirit. Dr. B. B. Warfield says that this statement "is not to be confounded with guiding, or directing, or controlling, or even leading in the full sense of that word. It goes beyond all such terms, in assigning the effect produced specifically to the active

agent. What is 'borne' is taken up by the 'bearer,' and conveyed by the 'bearer's' power, not its own, to the 'bearer's' goal, not its own. The men who spoke from God are here declared, therefore, to have been taken up by the Holy Spirit and brought by His power to the goal of His choosing. The things which they spoke under this operation of the Spirit were therefore, His things, not theirs." The fallacy in this reasoning is found in the fact that the being "borne along" necessarily involves a passive personality. A figure of speech is pressed at the expense of fundamental facts. The winds drive the ship when its sails are set and the ship has nothing to say about the operation. The reason is obvious. It is a thing and therefore in the very nature of things is passive. But when this term involves personalities and personal relationships it is at once evident that to say the very least, it is quite possible that the being "borne along" may be quite different from the process which merely involves things. We are not questioning the statement that these "men spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit." That is admitted. But how were they borne along? They were so borne along that they came to know the mind of God so that they could speak from Him. But how did they come to know that mind? Fortunately for us a great deal of light is thrown upon this question from Peter's own experience. In other words we have on record at least one case in which we can see the Holy Spirit doing this very thing which Peter speaks of here, and it is hard to think that

Peter did not have his own experience in mind when he wrote these words. The incident is that in which Peter came to realize in a living way "that God is no respecter of persons," and that the Gentiles have just as free and real a part in the thing Jesus came to do as the Jews have. That is commonplace enough to us but it was a tremendous revelation, and a thoroughly revolutionizing one to the apostolic church. Peter was recognized as a holy man and in this incident we have this holy man speaking from God. Cornelius sent for him to go up to Caesarea and when he reached there he found Cornelius and his friends gathered together at the centurion's home. Peter asked them with what intent they had sent for him. In answer to his question Cornelius told the story of his vision and experience and concluded with the following significant words: "We are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord." Peter accepted the challenge of these words and immediately "opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons," etc. Here we have the holy man speaking from God and he says that he has now come to perceive the truth that was commanded him of God. The Greek word here translated "perceive" is the same word as John used when he spoke of the world not understanding or apprehending Jesus. What the world did not do in the case of Jesus, Peter did do in the case of this fundamental truth. He was "borne along" by the

Holy Spirit until he reached his goal. Let us go back and see how he was carried along.

For a considerable time he was down at Joppa. Was he there in retirement that he might get light upon some of the questions that were being forced upon the attention of the church while it was scattered abroad? In any case we know that he went up to the house top to pray, and while he waited in prayer he fell asleep and had a vision. It is hard to think that the vision did not have some immediate contact with his thought and prayer. In any case in that vision his mind was aroused along a line that was hindering the Jews from entering into the truth of Christianity. He was made to feel that what God cleansed he was not to make common. But he did not yet come to understand the truth that he uttered in Cornelius' house. He was sufficiently aroused to make it possible for him to understand that God wanted him to go on up to Caesarea with the men that were sent to him by Cornelius. By the time he reached Caesarea he was able to say that "God showed" him that he should not call any man common or unclean. It was not until Cornelius had told his story that he came to understand that God is not a respecter of persons. When the Holy Spirit came upon the Gentiles who listened to his story of Jesus as the Anointed One ordained by God to be the judge of the living and the dead he came to understand that the Gentiles had as real a part in Christ and His work of redemption as the Jews. He speaks of this as a direct revelation from God. When he told the

story to the Jews who brought him to task at Jerusalem he asked, "Who was I that I could withstand God?" Surely that makes a process in which the personality was active in receiving and experiencing a truth until at last it became a burning and transforming conviction in the life that made it possible for Peter to speak from God with power. It is the simple and natural story of the human side of the process in which the Holy Spirit carried along a holy man who spake from God. It is certainly difficult to believe that a man with an experience like that could possibly come to hold a mechanical theory of revelation in which the personality through which that revelation finds utterance is merely passive in the process. The great fact that remains in that experience is that God did speak to a holy man and made him to understand what he did not understand before and that truth became so real and vital to him that he actually spoke "from God," and the people recognized his message as a message from God.

This experience is supported by Christ's interpretation of Peter's experience at Caesarea Philippi. He came to a true interpretation of the person of Christ and Jesus plainly said that it was not a merely human insight, but an insight that was given to him by God the Father. It does not tell us how God gave him that insight. If the process were outlined I have no doubt but we would find that the personality was just as active as in the case which we have just considered.

The two things of abiding importance for our present purpose are that God could give him a true insight and he could receive and perceive that truth. If these two things are possible we have a basis in the very nature of things which makes possible any revelation necessary to the carrying out of the great purpose of our world in bringing men up into a God consciousness and a God life.

Third, Peter believed that God in revealing His thought and purposes foreshadowed the line along which His plan was to move and that as a matter of history it was along this line that life fulfilled itself and the real progressive movements of history came. This meant a predictive element in prophecy. He does not anywhere say that prophecy was all prediction. But he does say again and again that God showed men some of the lines along which His plan was to move. He represents the prophets as receiving some messages and impressions which they did not fully understand. This is a very interesting passage. The Spirit made it clear to the prophets that history was moving not to a tragedy but a culmination, which would mean a general emancipation. This goal was to be reached through sufferings which were to be centered in a personality which is spoken of as "the anointed." The prophets understood that that goal was not to be reached in their day so they searched their own utterances and convictions to see if they could not understand the time or the manner of time indicated in this message

of suffering and hope. The outstanding impression made by this interesting passage is that of great throbbing personalities active in their desire to know the trend of things in such a relationship with their world as to make possible insights that made it clear to them that history was moving to a consummation which would mean salvation. In these activities the Holy Spirit was carrying them along. The fact that they were active in their search and thought is in no way inconsistent with the idea that the Spirit was carrying them on to His goal. It is simply a question of the method by which He carried them along, and what I am trying to point out in this connection is that in the particular case of Peter's experience that involves a "holy man" speaking from God, the method of revelation was unquestionably through personalities that were active in their search for truth. The truth came from God and the Spirit was active in carrying them forward to the right conclusions, but He was active in their experience. Now it is unthinkable that Peter did not have their experience in mind when he wrote concerning the prophets. Is there anything in these fundamental conceptions that is inconsistent with our world as we know it? Does his history support them? It is, of course, impossible to enter into anything like a comprehensive discussion of these questions within the limits of this thesis. Yet we can test them sufficiently to indicate as to whether or not they are in line with our deepest and truest insights.

First of all let us ask the question as to whether a revelation is possible. In a moral world centered in a moral personality and involving free moral personalities the presumption would be in favor of a revelation. If this is the world of a living, active and present Personality and it includes free personalities who are responsible for doing things that involve the interests of the world, it is reasonable to think that there must be a means of communication between these personalities. There is no question in our minds as to the possibilities of communication between personalities in every day life. We see it constantly; therefore we do not doubt it. There may be many differences of opinion as to the methods of communication and the psychological facts involved but there is no question as to the fact that one person can communicate with another person. In some way it is possible for one person to so stimulate another person as to make him think and know what he wants him to think and know. This is revelation. One mind is able to make itself known to another mind. If we receive stimulus that gives us new thoughts and ideas from personalities that we know, is it not reasonable for us to think that thoughts and ideas that come to us when we are not conscious of any particular person causing them to come to us are caused by stimulus received from intelligence. It is a matter of common experience that men feel as though ideas were given them just as they are when one personality is able to affect another so as to give new ideas and thoughts.

The late Dr. George Matheson, in speaking of his immortal hymn, "O Love that wilt not let me go," says, "Something had happened to me, which was known only to myself and which caused me the most severe mental suffering. The hymn was the fruit of that suffering. It was the quickest bit of work I ever did in my life. I had the impression rather of having it dictated to me by some inward voice than working it out myself." That impression of somebody so stimulating him as to give him the thoughts is in line with much that we find in literature and history. If this world is the world of a personality there is no reason known to science why that personality could not communicate with a great sensitive soul like Dr. Matheson. We have this same thing suggested from a different angle by Lord Kelvin. He told his friend, Principal Lindsey, "that he never reasoned quite up to any one of his great discoveries. He brooded over all the facts which seemed to him relevant to his problem, until there came a moment when his mind took a life-or-death leap away out into the unknown. He felt in the very marrow of his being the conviction that the solution lay just there. He was never able to put in the intervening stepping-stones of demonstration between his old position and the new to which his life-and-death spring had brought him. Before publishing his discoveries he usually got his two friends, Tait and Clark Maxwell, to work out the missing deductions." Here we have what seems like an instinct for what is true or relevant. This is present in a very marked

way in the great prophets. Peter says that it is God talking to them and it seems to me that if what is said pertains to life and godliness there is no valid reason in modern science or philosophy why it should not be so. All we are concerned with here is that in a world that is centered in personality the presumption is in favor of revelation and a glance at experience corroborates this presumption.

When we come to a close study of the literature to which Peter makes reference we find that it is not only characterized by this peculiar insight which marks the great poets and scientists, but in discovering the relevant and the deeper tendencies underlying the great currents in history it actually predicts the goals of history in a very wonderful way. Peter very clearly says that this is the case, and I contend that a careful examination of the literature and its history sustains his contention, and that is really what we might naturally expect in a world like ours. To begin with the latter first. If this is a purposeful world in which we are moving toward a goal it must be the purpose of someone and as the purpose involves the interests and activities of men and women who can understand purpose and plan it would be rather a strange thing if that controlling personality did not give some inkling of what His purpose and plan are. Not to do so would be contrary to everything that the common man knows of the activities and undertakings of intelligent beings. A man would never think of starting to build any kind of an important

structure without a plan, and without sharing that plan as the progress of the work might require it to the men that he might associate with himself in doing the work. There can be no doubt that we are fellow-workers with the architect of it. Our choices and decisions have determining values in the unfolding of the plans of our world. It would be a very strange thing if the great architect did not reveal to us something of what He is doing and the goal toward which "The whole creation moves." Peter, as a result of his contact with Christ and his study of the greatest inspirational literature of his day in the light of that contact, contends that God actually showed men what was to come to pass. That does not mean that He revealed all that was to come to pass. It simply means that He was able to reveal what was necessary to the carrying out of His plan. Professor Kemper Fullerton in one of his books undertakes to show that there is no such a thing as predictive prophecy. "It cannot be too strongly insisted upon," he says, "that predictive prophecy has always been immediately connected with a non-moral theory of inspiration. This connection is not accidental but essential. On the predictive theory the prophet is able to project himself centuries beyond his own day and place himself in circumstances and scenes absolutely alien to his thoughts and experiences . . . such a prediction could only be the result of a direct revelation from heaven which was psychologically unmediated. The reason for this is that in such a revelation the prophet himself was

a mere passive agent of the Holy Spirit." There are two fatal assumptions in this contention.

First, it is assumed that the prophet is passive, and second, that the predictive prophecy has no meaning for the prophet himself. As a matter of fact there is no reason why a prophet should be any less active in a predictive prophecy that would have meaning for an intelligent program than in any other kind of prophecy. The other evening I listened to the story of the development of a great life in Japan. The difference between my experience and the conditions under which that life was developed was very much greater than the difference between the circumstances of Isaiah's life and the conditions under which the Hebrews were restored to their own land under Cyrus. Yet I could tell that story without becoming non-moral in the sense that my normal powers would be paralyzed by my being separated from my own life and experience here in America. It is only necessary to bring this so called fundamental psychological difficulty into the midst of ordinary experience to show how absolutely absurd it is. It is quite possible for an architect to reveal to an ordinary layman enough of his plan for a great structure to enable him to know what he is endeavoring to do, and to make it possible for that layman to cooperate with him in the carrying out of the plan. There is nothing psychologically impossible or non-moral in the fact that he shows him some new ideas which have not yet been realized but which he hopes to embody in the proposed

building. This idea of real predictive prophecy being "psychologically unmediated" is an assumption that is in no way warranted by the facts. The prophecies to which Peter refers are not wild statements which had no vital connections with the prophets' experiences. On the contrary they grew out of the prophets' own principles which were involved in the individual and national and world crises which they were confronting. A fair and scientific study would show this to be true even of the great apocalyptic statements of Biblical literature. This I will show in a later chapter. At the present I call attention to it for the purpose of pointing out that this psychological objection to predictive prophecy raised by Professor Fullerton and the school of thought which he represents is based upon a gratuitous assumption. If one person can make his plan known to other persons there is nothing fundamentally inherent in the world of an intelligence to prevent predictive prophecy. Whether or not this literature to which Peter refers contains a predictive element is a historical question into which it is not necessary to enter at any length at this time. In fact that phase of the subject would require an extensive thesis in itself in order to deal with it adequately. Let it suffice simply to call attention to the significant fact that some of the ablest scholars and thinkers of our day have in their study of this subject come to the same conclusion as Peter. Professor Kautzsch of Halle says, "The abiding value of the Old Testament lies above all in this,

that it guarantees to us with absolute certainty the fact and the process of a divine plan and way of salvation, which found its conclusion and fulfillment in the new covenant, in the person and work of Jesus Christ." This fact is very suggestively and constructively developed by the late Professor J. Willis Beecher in his very able and scholarly work, "The Prophets and the Promise." Here the subject is lifted out of the realm of minute details and put in a historical setting that to me is unanswerable. It is very difficult to see how we can possibly account for that world outlook and optimism which characterizes Hebrew literature apart from an insight which the ordinary man can not possibly separate from the idea of predictive prophecy.

In the second place it is impossible for me to understand why the prediction of the triumph of moral principles in the establishment of an ideal world in which righteousness prevails should be meaningless to the great preachers of righteousness known as the Hebrew prophets.

CHAPTER VII

Why Do Men Seem to Find It Easier to Do Wrong Than to Do Right?

There is an additional question which troubles the common man whose chief consciousness is our every day common sense world. It seems to him that men are prone to do evil more than they are to do good. It seems easier to follow the lower ideals in life than it is to follow the higher goods. He usually assumes that this is in the very nature of things—"Man is made that way." This is the point at which we are brought face to face with what is known in theology as "original sin." This is not a question for theology alone. On the contrary it deals with one of the most important and pressing problems in practical life. It is not a theory but a fact that perplexes every serious thinker who earnestly faces the facts of life. There was a tendency a short time ago to make light of this fact, but the awful tragedy of the last few years has awakened men to the unspeakable depravity of even highly cultured lives, and the whole question has emerged in a most acute form. But as a matter of fact, while Sir Oliver Lodge could speak lightly of it and say that "none but a monk could have invented it," the more thorough and earnest thinkers have always been seriously impressed with its presence in

human experience. Kant, for example, says, "That there must be such a corrupt propensity rooted in men need not be formally proved in the face of the multitude of crying examples which experience sets before one's eyes in the acts of men."

While Peter has no definite statement on the subject he makes one or two references which are very suggestive. The first one is in the first epistle, chapter one and verse sixteen where he speaks of "your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers." This "manner of life" was the way of life from which they were redeemed. That was the sinful life and he speaks of it as being empty or profitless. The thing that arrests our attention in this connection is the fact that he says that it was "handed down" from the fathers. That looks as though Peter believed that they inherited their wrongness of life. This thing that was handed down from the fathers was the thing from which they were redeemed by Christ. He does not state how it was handed down, but everywhere he seems to assume that they were guilty for living that kind of a life. It is very interesting to note that while he speaks of a very obvious fact he does not commit himself to any theory concerning it. The expression used to described the fact is very suggestive and is broad enough to cover the most comprehensive insights gained concerning the fact through modern scientific investigation.

There is a second expression which he uses which may help us to get something of the idea that lay back

of this statement. In 1 Peter 2:25 he says, "Ye were going astray like sheep." This evidently is not a mere touch of rhetoric. He is talking about what Jesus did to save men from sin and make it possible for them to live unto righteousness. Here he clearly identifies the wrongness of the world with sin and he defines it as "going astray." He heard Jesus talk about lost men as sheep who were astray. The Prophet Isaiah also used the same idea and Peter was undoubtedly familiar with that reference. In fact we have every reason to think that that is the very passage he has in mind when he speaks of sin in this way. But we cannot think that he used it thoughtlessly. When he heard Jesus speak of men astray like sheep he must have made some comparisons between the Isaiah passage and the things that he knew about sheep. He was familiar with their ways. He must have often seen and watched them on the hills of Galilee and Judea. In all probability he often talked with some of the shepherds that watched their flocks on the night Jesus was born. He would be anxious to get from themselves the story of that wonderful night. In talking with them he would be most likely to discuss the habits of sheep in the light of what Jesus had said about them, especially in light of the command to feed His sheep. So when he said, "Ye were going astray like sheep" he must have had some philosophy of the "how" of the "handing down" of the vain manner of life referred to in the first chapter. In any case, there are two or three things that are suggested by this figure of

speech that explain why it seems easier to do wrong than to do right.

In the first place the sheep seem to have a natural propensity to wander out of place and to go astray. But closer study of the habits of the sheep will reveal that the flock instincts and influences are very much stronger and more vital in the sheep life than any tendency to wander away alone. One would not be surprised to find that the sheep life is nearly altogether dominated by the flock influence and habits. The individual sheep largely drifts with the flock. It is that social element and power that would impress a man like Peter. As there is a flock life which largely determines the life of the individual sheep so there is a social life in human society which becomes the vehicle through which a "manner of life" is handed down from generation to generation. Peter speaks of an empty or profitless manner of life being handed down but he does not say that that is the only "manner" of life that can be handed down.

What may seem at first thought to be an inherent bent or tendency may on closer study turn out to be a manner of life that is passed down by the fathers through social customs and institutions. Whatever may be the last word about original sin and heredity there can be no doubt of the tremendous power for the transmission of sin and evil ways and manners of the flock life as expressed in social customs and institutions.

The late Professor Rauschenbusch rendered a great

service in calling the attention of the church to this fact. He says, "That sin is lodged in social customs and institutions and is absorbed by the individual from his social group is so plain that any person with common sense can observe it. . . . The permanent vices and crimes of adults are not transmitted by heredity, but by being socialized: for instance alcoholism and all drug evils; cruel sports, such as bull fights and pugilism. . . . Just as syphilitic corruption is forced on the helpless foetus in its mother's womb, so these hereditary social evils are forced on the individual embedded in the womb of society and drawing his ideas, moral standards, and spiritual ideals from the general life of the social body."

O. Kirn, as quoted by Professor Rauschenbusch, says, "Heredity is not the only channel through which sin is spread and increased—defective education, evil example, and the direct incitement to sin by unjust treatment of seduction are of at least equal importance." A single example will suffice to illustrate what these men are calling attention to and at the same time show the reality and significance of the fact.

I was born and brought up among the Highland Scotch. The use of strong drink in moderation was looked upon by them as being wholly consistent and proper. On certain social occasions it was thought that some kind of intoxicants were necessary. Not to have them was looked upon as a serious breach of Highland hospitality. Mild intoxication, provided a gentleman be-

haved politely, was no disgrace. In fact many thought it made men more mirthful and socially agreeable. Men like Robert Burns praised and more or less sanctified this idea of things in their poetry and literature. Young people as they grew up were unconsciously trained into these ideas and habits. That had at the very least as much to do with the forming of the habits of intoxication as did heredity.

This process may be accurately described as the "handing down of a vain manner of life." Peter noted the fact but he did not describe the process. How much was back of that suggestive statement it is impossible to say, but I am inclined to think that there was more of the social idea than the interpreters of Peter have allowed. In a later chapter I will undertake to show conclusively that he had a comprehensive and fundamental social conception of the church and its mission.

This does not mean that Peter did not have any of the old idea of original sin in his thought. The solidarity of the race means not only the union of all nations and races but also a vital union of the generations. Even Professor Rauschenbusch, who has laid so much emphasis on the fundamental importance of environment, allows that "evil does flow down the generations through the channels of biological coherence." He also recognizes that "all who have to train the young find themselves marshalling motives and forces to strengthen the higher desires against the drag of unwillingness." Peter's phrase is quite capable of bearing this further

interpretation. This is simply one of the channels through which the fathers hand down their vain manner of life. The reason why men find it so easy to do evil and so hard to do good is found in the fact that the currents of life are set through social habits and institutions which are the main channels through which the ordinary life is guided and molded. An intelligent study of these currents and institutions will reveal ample reason why men find it hard to be good. The rational thing to do in order to secure the right manner of life is to change the channels of transmission. This involves individual and social regeneration. We will be interested to find that that is exactly what Peter concluded.

But that subject belongs to a later study. There is a third thing that is suggested by the sheep that Peter recognized as entering into this matter of doing the wrong thing. The sheep is very susceptible to leadership. The bell sheep leads the whole flock. This also seems to be a fundamental trait in human nature. It startles us to note how one man can start a whole generation on a wrong line of thought from which it is almost impossible to rescue them. It is also very instructive to note how the masses swing from one extreme of thought to another scarcely realizing that they have changed. We have had many illustrations of this in the last few years.

Peter taught that there is a great evil spiritual power that is represented by an evil person who is constantly

enticing men and women to wrong and evil ways. This idea of a "personal devil" is not popular in our day. In fact it is generally supposed that people of culture and scientific habits of thought do not and cannot retain such a crude idea. At the same time it is exceedingly interesting to note the tendency in some of the greatest thinkers of our day to recognize a something that very greatly resembles this thing that Peter speaks of—for example men like Professor Wundt of Germany and the late Professor Royce of Harvard have much to say about the reality of "Super-personal forces" in human life. Professor Rauschenbusch, who rejects the traditional idea of a devil, contends that the facts of life call for some conception of a Kingdom of Evil. "We ought," he says, "to get a solidaristic and organic conception of the power and reality of evil in the world."

In speaking of the two doctrines of "the heredity racial unity of sin, and the supernatural power of evil behind all sinful action" he says that they "created a solidaristic consciousness of sin and evil, which I think is necessary for the religious mind. Take away these two doctrines, and both our sense of sin and our sense of the need of redemption will become much more superficial."

He also frankly admits that "no positive proof can be furnished that our universe contains no such spiritual beings as Satan and his angels." All this is very significant. Can we have such unity as is involved in these "Superpersonal" and "evil kingdom" powers

apart from personality? Are we quite sure that philosophically speaking it would not be very much easier to make out a case for Peter's devil than it would be for these impersonal influences and kingdoms?

If there are definite and intelligent suggestions to evil they must emanate from an intelligence. A mere impersonal influence can not make definite suggestions to follow evil ways and do evil things. When we are in the midst of a society that is charged with certain ideas and tendencies we can easily understand feeling this influence and being inclined to follow them. That is a very simple question of psychology. But what about a man when he is away from all his fellows and is definitely and earnestly endeavoring to get away from evil thinking and sets his mind toward good and worthy ideas, and in the midst of that definite effort there press in upon him evil and unworthy thoughts? Where do they come from? Can the mind be stimulated to reason consecutively excepting through intelligence? Is it likely that these thoughts could come from the subconscious self when the self is earnestly engaged in seeking high and worthy thoughts? The deep consciousness of a force that we are definitely opposing must be accounted for. I can easily account for feelings that sweep over me when I am in the presence of some personality that is definitely influencing me contrary to my best judgment. But what about similar feelings toward evil which seem to rush in upon the life when I am alone and definitely setting the mind on a directly op-

posite line? That experience is very common. Peter knew it, and one of the elements that enters into it he says is the suggestion of evil thoughts by an evil personality who is seeking to disorganize and destroy human personality. We must not get his Satan mixed up with the traditional devil. He is not an all powerful being who is not in any way subject to God and the laws of His world. He is a powerful, subtle and free evil spirit who is in open rebellion against God. Belief in a Satan like that does not necessarily land us in hopeless dualism. In our own world we have individuals who are free creators and can organize evil societies whose influence is powerfully set against the life of our world, and are allowed to use their powers to solicit others to join them in rebellion. But this is simply the fact of freedom within the scope and permission of the final will. If that is possible in our world of experience why could it not be possible in the Spirit world?

As Professor Haering very ably shows, we can not demonstrate that it is so and neither can we demonstrate that it is not so. But we can not lightly turn Peter's interpretation aside as a mere superstition. He was breaking away from the traditions of his day. The difference between his interpretations of life and ordinary traditions of his day was wider than the difference between many of the progressive thinkers of our day and the traditional positions of our times. It is of vital importance to remember this. This difference came because of his unquestioned experience of reality. There is no experience

of his that was more real and genuine than his fight with evil tendencies and forces in his life. Jesus told him at one time that the devil sought to destroy him. Peter must have talked with Jesus about that. From everything we know about Peter it would be unnatural to think that he did not. Jesus talked over with him His own conflict at the opening of His public ministry. He did not hesitate to say that that was a conflict with a personal devil. That was one of the deepest and most significant conflicts in the whole life of Jesus. There more than in any other experience He had to press back all false ideals and conceptions and come to an adequate conception of life that would make it possible for Him to launch out on a true and adequate idea of His own mission. He pierced to the very heart of things and made choices that show that He fully understood life and its issues and was able to decide in a comprehensive and fundamental way between the things that are true and eternal and the superficial things that dominated the traditions of His time. The heart of that conflict was a personal power that had access to His thought life and definitely tried to get Him to accept traditional or unworthy conceptions of His life, ministry and mission. Is it possible that He was able to discern the issues involved so truly and yet mistake the nature of the power that He was fighting? At any rate I think it will be generally granted that no personality in history ever had a steadier, deeper and clearer look into the heart of the world that involved that moral struggle than He had. That unques-

tionably was Peter's great authority for his doctrine of a devil. Is it not reasonable to think that he was influenced by that more than he was by the traditions with which he had so hopelessly broken? However many of them clung to him, the one outstanding thing in his life is the fact that his experience of God in Christ had forever separated him from them.

In any case this is Peter's explanation of the subtle evil forces which are constantly felt in human experience and which make it seem as though it were more natural for men to do evil than to do good. There is no doubt that our fathers "handed down to us a vain manner of life," and that we through the socialization of many of our empty manners of life, are doing the same thing for our children. Knowing this it is of superlative importance that we should search the how of this "handing down" and change it and make it a channel of "handing down" the conceptions of life that are in line with the best things we know. If there is a great spiritual power of evil that tempts men away from the good, Peter tells us of a great spiritual power of good that is mightier than any power of evil and constantly works for our freedom and highest good.

That brings us to our next consideration.

CHAPTER VIII

The Price of Freedom

The most prominent thing in Peter's thinking is not men's proneness to sin but the fact that men can be freed from the vain manner of life handed down by the fathers. However these things have been handed down and whatever may be the final explanation of the tendencies that carry men to unworthy ends, the greatest truth known to humanity is that there is a power available to men that makes it possible for them to break with the evil and empty manner of life and to go in the very teeth of these tendencies to evil and to realize worthwhile ends. It is the recognition of this fact that dominates the thinking of this fisherman philosopher. It is the realization of this thing that made him the great personality that he was. This fact was not a mere matter of theory with him but rather the deepest experience of his life. He himself was redeemed from a vain, barren and disappointing "manner of life" and brought out into an original experience of freedom that made him one of the most original and dynamic personalities of his generation. Naturally his idea of this redemptive power is one of the most suggestive and interesting phases of his philosophy.

First of all it is important to note that Peter looked

upon this redeeming purpose in life as centered in Jesus Christ. His great message was the message of Jesus Christ as the Redeemer. When he spoke on the day of Pentecost the great heart passion of his message was that the Jesus whom the people had rejected was the Messiah and that he had been exalted and had sent the spirit of love and of redeeming and transforming power upon His people that they might immediately become a redemptive force in human life.

Second, Peter did not look upon this redemptive purpose as something apart from the deep purpose that conditioned the basic meanings of his world. It was not a mere incident in the life of Christ, or in the history of the world. It was a part of the great purpose of God for the ages and was the thing toward which the prophets looked, and a subject of vital interest to the angels. These convictions show clearly that Peter's philosophy of salvation was not a narrow, superficial and merely individualistic thing, but a great cosmic conception that swept through the deepest thinking of the ages involving the deepest purposes of the universe.

Third, he clearly understood that it was not an easy and cheap thing that could be accomplished by proxy, or bought with material considerations. In order that men might be redeemed from "the vain manner of life handed down from the fathers" it was necessary that God should enter into a life and death struggle with sin and its consequences in human life. He has several

statements bearing on this that are exceedingly suggestive. "Ye were redeemed, not by corruptible things, with silver and gold . . . but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19). All of this was done that men's faith and hope might be in God (1 Peter 1:21). Again, "who His own self bare [or carried up] our sins in His body upon the tree, that we having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed—for ye were going astray like sheep; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls" (1 Peter 2:24-25).

Here he makes plain statements without entering upon any theological or philosophical explanations of them. I wish to note a few of the things that are stated.

1. He assumes that the people to whom he was writing came to know a power that emancipated them from the empty manner of life handed down to them by their fathers. It is a matter of history that a real power was manifested in that generation that made it possible for the men who took seriously the message preached by Peter and his fellow apostles to break away from the barren formalism of their fathers and to realize a new and richly fruitful life that according to the most careful historians changed the course of history.

2. The introducing of that power or movement into the world cost Jesus Christ His life. In other words, they were redeemed with precious blood. Whatever else

these words may mean they certainly mean that it was the death of Jesus that made it possible for them to break with the past manner of life and to enter into the new order of life. He does not introduce any theological explanation. He simply states the fact.

3. In this death He carried up the sins of the people upon the tree. Here again we have a fact stated without any attempt at explanation. Whatever may be the final meanings of the fact there can be no question that it is literally true that Jesus carried the sins of the people to the cross. It was the sins of the people that put Him there. The empty formalism, greed, envy, class hatred, opportunism and injustice of His day struck upon Him and wounded Him unto death. He openly attacked the sin of the race as it was manifested in His day and in the institutions with which He had to do, and men resented the exposure, and the deadly nature of the sin which He exposed was revealed in the fact that rather than forsake it men actually attacked the innocent one and killed Him. Peter clearly saw and stated that simple fact. The church has lost the full significance of this fact because it has allowed the actual thing that took place to be over-shadowed by the theological explanation which grew up around it. The thing that we need to clearly see is that Jesus literally carried up the sins of the world in His own body upon the tree. There was no artificial reckoning about the matter. He suffered for us and for all men because He suffered to free men from the very things that crucified Him. This

was not exceptional but the deepest law of life in a world like ours. Peter understood this. Is not this the deepest meaning of this wonderful statement in 1 Peter 1:21, "Who through Him are believers in God." Moffatt translates it in this way, "It is by Him that you believe in God." It is the God that was revealed in the suffering Christ that men believed in. This suffering was that "He might bring us to God." When we are brought to God in Christ we are brought to a suffering God—not a God who suffered just for that moment, but a God who is always carrying up the sins of the people in His purpose of redemption. I am quite aware of the fact that He died once on the tree for sins, but that can not mean that the sorrow of the divine in Christ was just for the moment of the sublime stoop in the life of the historic Jesus. Macaulay tells us "that his father—Governor of Sierra Leone—could not see a company of female slaves pass him by, and realize with his vivid sympathy, the lives of shame and torture to which they were doomed, without being dazed and stunned for hours." The same thing is brought out by the biographer of Mrs. Booth. "She could not see a negelected sore or witness a ruthless wrong without a pain that sometimes became physical nausea." Sometimes the pang of sympathy may be greater than the pain itself. This is suggestively brought out in one of our war books. In his chapter on "The Virgin Mother of Montauban" Thomas Tiplady says, "She stands there as the representative of the world's womanhood sorrowing over

the noble men who are passing by into the deepening shadow. While one gazes at her the roadsides seem to throng with the sad faces of mothers, each one of whom anxiously looks at the soldiers in the passing regiments to see if her own boy is there. . . . Iron shells can destroy buildings of iron and stone, but they can not destroy the love and solicitude of a mother." The keenest pain is felt not by the men who march to the sound of music or make the wild charge at the word of command but by the wives and mothers who in far off homes wait and watch and pray in agony, fearing to read the roll of the dead lest they be smitten with a sorrow that they must carry to the grave. This thing must be in the heart of God. "It is the inexorable demand of our heart that the God of the universe shall carry a cross." Robert Browning understood this when he said

"The authentic sign and seal
Of Godship, that it ever waxes glad,
And more glad, until gladness blossoms, bursts
Into a rage to suffer for mankind
And recommence at sorrow."

Professor G. A. Johnston Ross speaks of this as one of the universal elements in the life of Jesus. "Behind His death was the suffering and the redeeming love of God. . . . . It is His death that supremely attests the all-embracing and invincible love of God." This is not mere theory or poetry but a tremendous reality. It was this that made the "care" and sympathy of God tre-

mendously real to Peter in the great sufferings which he endured. "God so loved the world that He *gave*" is the core of the Gospel. But we must not keep that in the past tense. God so loves the world that He gives His life in an eternal passion for its redemption. In the words of Professor T. H. Green, "God is an act of eternal sacrifice, and Christ the reproduction of that act in time."

> "I never realized God's birth before,
> How He grew likest God in being born.
> Such ever was love's way—to rise, it stoops."

4. Peter also understood that this suffering meant the suffering of the innocent for the guilty. Here again we have to be very careful not to attribute to him our theological interpretations of this fact. It was vicarious suffering but that is as far as Peter goes. We of this day have no difficulty in reasonably appreciating the possibilities of this kind of suffering. Millions of men have suffered in our day for sins and crimes of which they were wholly innocent. The boys who made the supreme sacrifice had nothing to do with the conditions which brought on the war. If what we have been saying regarding the meaning and significance of the war means anything it means that the innocent carried up the sins of the age to the field of battle and there they suffered for the guilty, and suffered to free the world from military bondage. I do not say that the suffering and death of Christ did not mean more to the world and to the

universe than the death of these boys. They did. But I am calling attention to the modern fact by way of showing that what Peter said regarding the sufferings of Christ was neither impossible nor unethical. The men of this generation will have no difficulty in preaching the gospel of vicarious suffering because the most glorious thing in this world crisis is the sublime abandonment with which millions gave themselves to suffer for others. I think when we come to study Peter's idea of what Christ came to save men to we will see that he had no narrow or superficial conception of the real meaning and significance of this principle of vicarious suffering in human life.

1 P. 3:18

5. Peter clearly states the purpose of this suffering on the part of Christ. "Christ suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, *that He might bring us to God*." In speaking to those who accepted his gospel he said, "Ye are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." He also makes it clear that Jesus was manifested for our sakes that we might be believers in God and that our hope and faith might be in Him." The inference is that all this was done because God loved men and He was anxious to redeem them from a wrong manner of life by reconciling them to Himself and getting them to fully trust Him. Jesus did not have to die to reconcile God to men or to make Him love them, but He died because God did love men and He wanted to reconcile them to Him and His government. That, so far as I can understand him, was Peter's

philosophy of the sufferings and death of Jesus. They revealed God in His endeavors to reconcile men to Himself and to lead them to the trust and obedience that would make possible the highest kind of life. In love He atoned for our sins.

6. The result of this sacrificial suffering was the healing of the world. By His suffering Jesus atoned for sin and centered the thought of men upon a God who loves them and is doing all He can to save them from an empty manner of life and to lead them into a life fruitful in righteousness, and this centering of faith in God means the healing of a rebellious world's wounds. These wounds have resulted from rebellion against God and his purposes. The healing of them naturally comes through reconciliation. The rebellion must be given up if the wounds would be healed. This is literally what happens when men are reconciled to God through the cross. There is nothing arbitrary about this thing. It is not an artificial way of reckoning of a man just, but a fundamental adjustment of life through a vital change of attitude which puts the life in a new relationship in the moral universe. Therefore we can confidently say that there will be no healing of the world's wounds until the lives of men are rightly adjusted in their world; and this is what Peter meant by being brought to God and being healed through the sufferings that make this reconciliation possible.

The philosophy that is back of these simple observa-

tions is this. The redemption of the world from selfishness is not an easy, superficial, arbitrary thing. It is not wrought by a God who is separated from the world and its sufferings but by a God who lives eternally in the very process of sacrificing Himself in the passion of love that He may realize the deepest purposes of His life in oneness with all life through its submission to Him in love. That simple idea forms a basis for the very best philosophical thought of our day.

James Robertson Cameron in a review of modern philosophy says, "We do not find in our experience that as we die to live in others' lives we lose a single pulsebeat of our personality, we rather gain; we gain indeed not otherwise than we lose ourselves in them. It is self-realization through self-sacrifice. . . . There is 'dying to live,' 'the law of the spirit of life,' by which the Infinite perpetually fulfills itself in others who by reason of the elemental law within them, less or more, fulfill themselves by sharing in its life." Peter puts that in this simple way, "God suffers for us and gives His very life for us in Christ that He may bring us to Himself so that He may impart the divine nature to us." How nearly this expresses what is in Mr. Cameron's mind can be seen from the following words which he quotes from "Nettleship's Fragment on the Atonement": "The doctrine of the New Testament goes so far as to say that God Himself gave (and is eternally giving) up what is dearest to Him in order to save the life of the world.

God can only be at one with His work, can only make it to be truly His work, by eternally dying—sacrificing what is dearest to Him." Mr. Cameron adds, "I think that passage well defines our doctrine, with only this to add; that the whole dynamic truth is not alone that God dies to live and be at one with man, but that man is thus and thus constrained to die to live and be at one with God. Man's free or self-determined oneness with God is God's triumph in man and man's triumph in God. Here we touch the centre of personality and history alive, and therefore the centre of the historic personality of Jesus; and only a thorough going Idealism can ever appreciate its magnitude or the magnitudes of God and man which it involves."

We are not able to tell how deeply Peter saw into the philosophical implications of his teachings, but there can be no doubt that he thoroughly understood that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself that He might impart to it His own nature and that this process meant intimate fellowship and suffering—suffering in which He bore the sins of the world. In other words he clearly understood that what God is doing for the world in bringing it into the realization of its life He is doing at an infinite cost. No philosophical insight of any age has gotten beyond that bleeding heart of life and history. The recognition of this fact does not deny the further fact that Christ on the cross and in the article of death did something once for all to make pos-

sible the forgiveness of sins which could only be done by God. The mystery of that act is a part of the agony of God which passeth all understanding, which we accept in childlike faith awaiting the light that may break from it and upon it in the eternal day.

CHAPTER IX

The New Royalty

One of the unmistakable marks of the reality and accuracy of Peter's thinking is found in his conception of salvation. He understood that the fundamental element in it was the reconciling of men to God. This means in the first place to be freed from the former vain and empty manner of life—the "putting away" of malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and all evil speaking. This is but the beginning of things—the clearing away of difficulties and the adjustment of the life that it might "grow unto salvation." He evidently saw that the being freed from the vain manner of life was but a very small part of salvation. Men are reconciled to God for a purpose and they are not really saved until they begin to serve that purpose. To be reconciled to God involves the being reconciled to His program. They come to Him for the purpose of serving Him. To serve God in the very nature of things is to serve His purpose and plan. At this point Peter seems to have had a wonderfully significant insight, an insight which seems to anticipate the most advanced thinking of our day. President Wilson in speaking of the great program of the progressive statesmen of our day in a speech delivered at the tomb of George Washington said, "What we seek is the reign

of law based upon the consent of the Governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind." He had great world ideas that he believed were necessary to the saving of the world from war in the coming days. He understood perfectly that these ideas were of no use until they could be embodied in an organization. They must get a body through which they can be expressed before they can become effective in the life of the world. Therefore he was seeking to organize the opinion of mankind.

Peter understood that fundamental social principle and saw clearly that what God is seeking to do is to organize men so that they may become the body—or instrument—through which He can interpret Himself and carry out His plans for the ages. In his effort to express this fundamental insight he used several illustrations which at first sight seem like a hopeless mixture of figures of speech. He said, "Ye are a spiritual house, an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation." A closer study of these, however, will reveal that underlying them all is a fundamental social idea that is signally significant and profound. He says that God wanted to save men from a vain and empty manner of life in order that He might build them up into a "spiritual house." This is not a mechanically built house, but a living organism, represented in our thought not so much by a building as by the use of the word house when we speak of "the house of Guelph." That is an organization which stands for certain relationships, prin-

ciples and ideals. This organization or spiritual house was to be founded in and to embody the life and ideals of Christ. Peter understood that these ideals had been rejected by men. He also understood that they met with God's approval and were precious and honorable in His sight and were made the cornerstone of the coming empire. Nations and dynasties will pass away but this spiritual house will stand.

He speaks of those who belong to this house as "living stones." That is, the house is a living organism and men are built into it through internal adjustment and vital relationship rather than by mechanical and external methods. That is expressed in the phrase, "ye are an elect race," literally a house of born ones (genosek-lekton). A man can join a church but he must be born into this royal house. In other words, this is a matter of vital relationship and not of mere profession. He also designates it as "a holy nation." That means at least two things. First, it is a social organism. Men are to grow up "into salvation" in a social relationship. That means that men in being saved must give their life to the building up of this social organism and in this giving of their life they realize themselves at their best. Second, being a "holy" nation it is a separated nation. I think the context makes it very clear what he has in mind by this separation. The house was to be built out of men that were redeemed from a "vain manner" of life—that is, the old selfish world order which meant sorrow, shame and death. Now they are to be

separated to the manner of life revealed in Christ which was accepted by God as honorable. Therefore, it was a living organization to make real His ideals in the world and to hand them down to the coming generation.

The living organization or social body is spoken of by Peter as a "brotherhood." He evidently understood that in its normal functioning it was to realize the life of brotherhood. This naturally follows its deepest purpose as defined by him. He says that the organism was to be possessed by God that it might show forth His excellencies, or as Dr. James Moffatt translates it, "That you may proclaim the wondrous deeds of Him who has called you." A correct manifestation or interpretation of the divine life would in the very nature of things involve brotherhood. Evidently Peter clearly understood that it was a social relationship of that nature that the individual was to realize his life and adequately fulfill his purpose. In other words this whole conception is a highly social conception and his interpretation of salvation is a social interpretation of the very highest order. He did not know modern science and was not familiar with our modern social philosophy but he did have a genuine experience of life which gave him a true insight into its nature and meanings which he stated in his own plain way, and while men may think that the phraseology is out of date the thing that he saw and described is the very thing that the men who are truest and most penetrating in their thinking today are trying to say and describe. It is exceedingly interesting to note

how the most thorough and searching, constructive thinking of our day is centering upon this conception of life.

Professor Garvie says, "As rational, man sets before himself an end to be reached, and this can not be anything else than self-realization, the development of his personality in accordance with its idea. But this self is not an isolated individual, independent and sufficient in itself. Social relations are essential and not accidental to it, for it is only in communion and cooperation with others that any man's faculties of mind, heart and will are brought into exercise and thus developed. Individual development and social progress mutually depend, for the perfection of the parts, and the whole can not be separated." He calls attention to the fact that this conception, which he finds to be that held by Dr. MacKenzie in his "Introduction to Social Philosophy," is a decided advance on the prevalent "atomic" view of the relation of individuals in a society. He says further, "We can not now go behind it; we must even insist that society is at least as organic in respect to mutual dependence of the parts on the whole as is the body. We may however advance beyond it, as Herbert Spencer's practical conclusion shows that the analogy is inadequate. Human society is more organic than the body, because its unity is known and willed and so can be consciously and voluntarily made still more a unity."

Professor Garvie makes it quite clear that "Socializa-

tion and individualization are two sides of a single process." This is what is involved in the community ideal which we find in Peter's teachings. The individual is redeemed from an empty manner of life in which he was self-centered and vitally related in an organism that made possible a new expression of the life that led to a fuller realization of the individual and a very definite contribution to the community. Our author insists upon it that it is in this new relationship that the individual is to find himself and through it he is to make his greatest contribution to his world. Professor Royce in speaking of the individual says, "He can not unaided win the true goal of life. Help must come to him from some source above his own level." From this he goes on to show that the individual is saved if at all by a membership in a community which has salvation. Peter points out such a community. He calls it a spiritual building, the life of which is Jesus Christ. That is the secret of its power to help the individual and the world. It is the dominating of the organism by the life and spirit of God that makes it a saving organization. While the living stones are all on the same level they are pervaded by a life which is above them and this is the thing that saves them. Let me state in a practical way what this deep philosophical insight as seen by Peter means in our world. Here is a man of more than ordinary ability. In the experience that comes to him in his church life he is led to give his life to missionary work in India. He finds a half starved native boy, and he

denies himself many comforts in order that he may nourish and educate him. That boy becomes a perfect specimen of physical development and takes a university degree granted to only three men in all India. Now he gives his life to the emancipation and development of his fellow natives. There we have the working out of the idea of a living organism that is a saving society. The individual gives himself and in that abandonment experiences the highest form of self-development, and that development is immediately invested in the service of the whole community. When that kind of salvation comes to an individual he can not help but affect the whole community. That is the kind of salvation that Peter preached and it is nothing short of a calamity that the church very early in its history lost sight of its social significance and developed a purely individualistic philosophy which is the exact opposite to the essential meaning of Peter's teachings.

Not only is Peter's idea in line with the best philosophical insights from this particular point of view but it also meets the challenge of social life and its impelling needs. Some one has said, "The social gospel tests the claims and powers of our church by the continuity of the apostolic faith within it and by its possession of the law and spirit of Jesus." That is another way of saying that the social needs of the world challenge the church to give concrete expression to the life of Christ. Peter tells us that that is the very purpose for which it was created. In the measure in which it has failed to fulfill

this purpose it has failed to interpret correctly the fundamental meaning of the New Testament message. Peter, however, guards the message at a point at which modern interpreters are inclined to lose sight of the importance of the individual message. He tells that the society is a society or house that is made up of "living stones." Peter appreciated that something very important took place in the lives of the individuals who became living stones. It is what happened to those lives that made possible a saving organism. They accepted a very definite manner of life which resulted in a fundamental quickening of the life. To these men the acceptance of Christ meant the acceptance of a new order of life—a totally new philosophy of things. Edward Caird in his account of Christianity's first effect upon Greek and Roman civilization says, "It breaks down all the walls of division that had hitherto separated individuals, families, and nations from each other; it cast aside and utterly repudiated all the prejudices of rank and caste, of race and custom, and bade men, as simply men, recognize each other as brethren. It sought, in the fire of its charity, to burn up every grudge and repugnance, every doubt and suspicion that had made men regard each other with alien eyes, and to put an end to all the waste of human existence in competition and conflict by binding them into the unity of one body, animated by one will and one Spirit." In other words, Christianity gave a new view of social duty to the world. This view came, however, through the experience that made men

"living stones" for the new social order. This fact does not make Peter's message any less social but makes it more pertinent for our day. Harold Begbie in his book "Living Water" says, "I feel convinced that what is immediately essential for our peace is a change of will in the whole community. A change of mind which will not only effect parliament but municipalities, and not only the employer but the private citizen." Our danger is to think that there is some general wholesale way of doing that and to glide into the use of generalities which will defeat the very thing that is essential. If the whole community is going to change it will be because the individuals which compose it are definitely challenged and led to make that change. We must build up an organism that is composed of "living stones" who are literally possessed with the idea of the fundamental importance of the change sought and therefore are themselves already completely committed to it. The reason the modern church is not a more vital power in the life of the world is because many of the individuals who are on her rolls and prominent in her activities have never seriously committed themselves to the ideals for which she professes to stand. At this point Peter's insight is vital and fundamental. He recognizes that the church, in order to be a saving organism with a compelling message, must be a living society which is constantly experiencing the things that it represents. Whenever it has experienced in any great vital way the life that it represents it has arrested the attention of the world.

The world might finally reject the message, but it could not wholly ignore it. This is illustrated by such crises as the Reformation and the work of John Wesley in Great Britain. Lecky, who himself was a free thinker, declares that the influence of the Wesley revival saved England from the same things as came to France in the great Revolution. At any rate there can be little room for doubt that that fresh experience of God meant very much to the life of the world.

Canon E. Burroughs, who is considered one of England's ablest interpreters of Christianity, in a speech delivered in Queen's Hall, London, on New Year's Day 1918, urged that the church's first and supreme duty was to urge upon the attention of the nation the fundamental importance of an honest national recognition of God. In urging this he said, "Other 'interests' can impose their will upon the Government—the brewers for instance. Why can not the Christians? The concessions extorted by the brewers are inconsistent with all that our rulers tell us is needed to win the war; yet, at the cost of eating their own words, our rulers go on making them. Why? Because the brewers appear to have an organized body of opinion behind them. The concessions which we Christians need to press for would be all in line with the appeals for sacrifice, economy, courage, and so forth, which are constantly being made to the nation: They would give them the background, the reality which at present they lack." The difference between the brewers and the church in Eng-

land was that the brewers had "an organized body of opinion" back of them while the church in its most fundamental life was failing to function—it was scattered and fragmentary. The supreme need of that situation was a living organism with a vital experience of God that would give it a vital, united and compelling message. The unity that is to meet this national and world challenge must be a unity that has its roots in a living experience and is cemented by a common passion for righteousness and world redemption. Peter's idea of an organism permeated by the life of God in a living experience of quickened personalities is the only thing that is comprehensive enough to meet this crying need of our modern world.

So once again we find that this common man's philosophy is in the highest sense a working philosophy which leads us to the very heart of the most challenging problems of our day and points out the way to their solution.

CHAPTER X

Is the New Royalty Practical?

Rudolph Eucken in his very able chapter on Augustine in his "Problems of Human Life" complains that "He leaves life too much in the transcendent Beyond, instead of reuniting it with the life of every day, and so utilizing it for the latter's salvation." If this is a just criticism of the great church Father it is a fundamental weakness in his system. A working philosophy must connect up in a very definite and vital way with the life of every day. This is the life for which we are now responsible, and it is what determines the life that is to come; therefore it is this life of every day that is our first practical concern. Our interest in a world philosophy is for the purpose of making it possible for us to intelligently relate ourselves to our world so as to make the most possible out of our lives. In other words, it is a living and practical and not a mere speculative interest. The practical life is the life that is rightly related to its world. That means its whole world. Sometimes we make a serious mistake by calling men who have to do with material things and adjustments the "practical men." Very frequently they are hopelessly impractical. Where, for example, men live and work on the assumption that only material things are practical, in-

stead of being practical they are stupidly blind. The major part of a man's life is mental and spiritual.

We frequently hear church people say that "a man has a soul" or "has a spirit." The fact is, a man is spirit and has a body. After a man dies we stand beside the body and look into the face but we can not bring ourselves to think that that is the man. We know that *he* is gone. The body is there. Every fibre of it that was there the day before his death is there the day after his death, but *he* is gone. Whatever our theory of personality and immortality we know that whatever has happened *he,* the man we knew and the man who responded to our touch and interest, is gone. Therefore, the important part of the life and personality is the part that is now missing. That is the part that makes the difference between a man and a corpse—the difference between life and death. With Arnold we can say of what remains,

"This but a hut which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which at last,
Like a bird my soul hath passed.

"'Tis an empty sea-shell,—one
Out of which the pearl is gone;
The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, *the all,* the soul, is here."

The interests of the spirit in a personality like that must be of fundamental and primary importance and therefore of superlative practical value. The ignoring of them would be tragically impractical. Therefore the really practical man is the man who has a philosophy that conditions the whole of life. Peter seems to understand this perfectly. After stating his idea of the new royalty which contains the elements of a comprehensive social philosophy he immediately proceeds to point out what our attitude and conduct in every day life should be. He did not forget to relate his philosophy to the immediate task and duty.

In this he is as wise and comprehensive as in his grasp of our cosmic relations. Instead of burdening his message with rules and incidental details he points out great general principles which are to govern men's activities in every relationship of society. As sojourners and pilgrims we are to abstain from the things that mar and destroy the inner life and light. We are not to do this by separating ourselves from the world and going out into the desert and lonely places where we are out of touch with the men of the world who are in open rebellion against our conception of life, but we are to live the life of free men in the very heart of the world so that they may see our manner of life and good works and be led to glorify God. The monastic ideal which developed later in the life of the church is based on a philosophy of life and Christian responsibility which is the very opposite to this teaching by Peter. This is an

additional evidence of how fundamentally sound and vital he was in his insights.

In our national and world relationships we are to recognize human government as necessary to a rational and stable society. We are to subject ourselves to men's laws "for the Lord's sake." We are not to ignore or be indifferent to social and political life. On the contrary, we are to be constructively active in order that by "welldoing" we should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. The freedom which Peter preached was not a freedom that sets men free from social and political obligations. To use freedom in that way would be to use it as a "cloak of wickedness." He was careful to make this very clear. The great principle that is involved in this general admonition is that we must not allow our individual interests to interfere with our larger obligations to the social order of which we are a part. This means not alone that we are not to interfere with government interests but that we are not to withhold our active support and service. This principle of practical life meets one of the greatest needs of modern society. One of the great menaces to real democracy is that political interest and activities are frequently left to selfish exploiters who look upon politics as an opportunity to advance their own interest and feather their own nests. The real reason for this state of affairs is found in the fact that large numbers of Christian men are not willing to subject their personal interests to the larger interests of society and to give the state

the time and service that are essential to good government. We complacently comfort ourselves that we are clean and innocent politically because we are in no way implicated in the dirty work of political exploiters. If Peter is right in this practical insight it is just as clearly a sin to withhold the constructive service which would make this political injustice impossible as it is to be implicated in the active carrying out of it.

In this he is true to the very heart of the Christian ideal. According to Jesus the thing for which men are finally driven out into the outer darkness is the failing to do the things that were necessary to meet the essential needs of God's little ones. "In as much as ye did it not." Therefore the challenging question of the New Testament is "How can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" If Christians have a life that can touch the heart of our great problem—a power that can make people righteous so that they can be right and true in all their activities—it certainly must be a sin of sins to neglect using it. This is a practical phase of Christianity that has been largely lost sight of during the centuries. It has in a great measure been interpreted in the terms of ceremony or in negative commands. This means a very vital departure from Peter's interpretation of Christian duty and service.

This same principle of submission for the sake of the good that we can do to others was to govern the activities of men in the household and family circles. In every case the principle that was to govern the attitude of the

Christian was not what he could get for himself but what he could give in the way of help and service that would manifest the glory of the new life and lead people to honor God. This never meant with Peter a servile submission that would in any way compromise principle. As a matter of fact Peter was willing to die rather than compromise the fundamental principles of his faith. Neither did this submission mean a compromising of the personality that would lead to a weak life that would make impossible a sane and wholesome realization of the self. In this he is true to the fundamental conception and genius of Christianity which brought it into conflict with the main pagan philosophies of life. How the denial of the self and the submission of the self-interest to the interests of others could be the best way to realize the self in its fuller and richer possibilities was not easily understood by the world that was dominated by the Greek, Roman and Hebrew ideals of Peter's day. Peter himself did not find it easy to learn. As you recall this was the lesson that Jesus tried to teach him at Caesarea Philippi when He said, "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it; whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall save it." But he did finally master this great secret of living and it is the dominating idea in his practical application of his philosophy. This is one of the hardest lessons in life to master. Men are coming slowly to appreciate its significance, but even in our day there are comparatively few who are willing to make it the working principle

of their every day life in the sense in which Peter taught it. Men find it hard to see how they can gain their life by losing it. Yet this can be philosophically and psychologically supported.

When selfishness determines the interest and activities of the self the motive, in the very nature of things, becomes a selective and narrowing process. When a person governed by a selfish motive meets his fellows he is interested in them only as they serve his personal desires and ambition. The rest of their lives and activities have no vital interest for him. Therefore, all that he takes over into his own personality is that little segment that responds to his selfish ambitions. An essentially selfish personality is in its development and unfolding definitely circumscribed by a process that results in robbing the life of large and wide interests for the lack of which it dries up and loses vital touch with its possible world.

On the other hand, if the dominating motive in the life is the desire to serve constructively all it comes into contact with, it immediately becomes interested not alone in the phases of the lives that it touches that would naturally appeal to it from the point of view of self interest, but also in everything that interests them, for it is seeking not alone its own good but also and supremely the good of others. This process in the very nature of personality results in carrying over into the personality a very much greater variety of interests than would be carried over by a merely selfish motive. That means

the enrichment and the gaining of the life that was surrendered in the interest of others. This is the essence of what Professor Royce means by salvation through loyalty. A life that is loyal to the interests of the whole in the very nature of things realizes itself at its best in this loyalty. To Peter the unity of our world was found in God as revealed in Christ. To surrender to Him, to be poured out in the interests of His world, means the highest activities of which the personality is capable. It means the living for an ideal that is most comprehensive.

Professor Carl Hilty, of Bern University, writes, "A broad vision, a larger heart for all, indifference for one's own self, care for others—all these are noble. There surely and naturally comes a moment when an exclusive or preeminent occupation about one's own self becomes unnatural, and in every larger nature—and it may perhaps be said in every existence at all worthy of men—there comes the impulse to free ourself from ourself and to live for an idea. This is the most decisive moment of existence." In speaking of culture he says, "In true culture three things seem to be essential; the conquering of natural sensuality and natural selfishness through higher interests, the wholesome and symmetrical training of the physical and mental faculties, and a correct philosophical and religious conception of life. Where one of these three is lacking there is a drying up in the man of something that had been capable of a better development. . . . Whoever has

not been able thus to subdue himself will never be a match for the world around him. . . . This is the way to true culture."

This last statement is another way of saying, this is the Christian ideal as over against the pagan ideal of self-realization. Professor Hilty wrote in 1907 saying that the time was coming when the one who holds this pagan conception "shall no longer be recognized as a truly cultured man." And then he adds these significant words which proved to be a solemn prophecy which has had its fulfillment in a way that this author did not dream of at the time that he wrote them. "On the one hand selfish solicitude for self and as much as possible of sensual enjoyment during a short life—on the other, human kindness, care for others, mental advancement, and the development of the nobler powers of the soul; these are the two great armies which now stand over against each other, ready for battle, and in one or the other you will be obliged to take your place." At the core of the great world war was this essential conflict of ideals. Germany in a very real sense stood for the Pagan philosophy of self as propounded by such men as Nietzsche, Treitschke and von Bernhardi. It made a supreme effort to save its life and become the great nation of history on this very principle. But instead of gaining a greater life it lost its soul of true greatness that was the Germany of other and better days.

CHAPTER XI

The Fiery Trial

It is a tremendously difficult thing to preach altruism and the reign of a good and loving God who has sufficient power to carry out His program in a world like ours. Peter found it so. One of the most difficult problems with which he had to deal was the problem of "the fiery trial" which came to those who accepted his Gospel of love and honestly endeavored to live the self-sacrificing life that he set forth as the will of God. Instead of things becoming easier for them they became harder. They met with all kinds of opposition and persecution. Did God care for them? If He did why did He not save them from these sufferings and fiery trials? Is He able to do it? In order to make it possible for people to persist in living a good life and continue to do good in the face of suffering it is necessary for them to get some satisfactory answer to these questions. We can not build a world of kindliness and brotherhood excepting as we have a sure foundation upon which to rest our faith and hope. For example, great and heroic suffering and service would be impossible on the basis of a faith such as is expressed by Bertrand Russell when he writes, "Brief and powerless is man's life; on him and all his race the slow sure doom falls pitiless and

dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way. . . . All the labour of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noon day brightness of human genius, and the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins."

Dr. H. S. Coffin, having quoted this statement writes, "If such an end is in view, it might as well come as soon as possible."

Men do not go forward to great things and build for coming generations on a faith like that. Peter gives us a very much firmer footing for patience, persistence and steadfastness in the day of trouble and testing.

First of all he makes it clear that this world is only complete in another—its final meanings must be found in this wider outlook. By this he does not mean a world that begins at death—"a new tract of time beyond the grave"—but another order of things that constantly haunts the precincts and fills the spaces of this life. That context of life gives its contents greater and richer meaning. He does not at any point try to establish this by arguments but assumes it and allows the view point to practically pervade all his speeches and writings.

Second, he tries to show that the God who is responsible for this world is a God whom we can trust. The great argument that he uses to support this position is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He lived a life which was wholly in the interests of others, yet it was full of persecutions and sufferings which finally

ended in a death of ignominy and shame. But He was raised from the dead and given glory that our "Faith and hope might be in God." His argument is that the God who was able to turn the tragedy of the life and death of Jesus into the greatest moral and spiritual triumphs of human history can be trusted to work out "the fiery trials" of our experience for our good. He contended that the most selfish and sordid motives and plans and activities of wicked men were overruled so as to work out God's purpose of love and the redemption of the world.

Third, he tries to show that God who wrought in the life, death and triumph of Jesus cares for the individual and has a purpose of development in the experiences that come as a result of our fellowship with Him in our service for men. This suffering when rightfully accepted and endured not only develops the life itself, but has a very definite value as a witness to the reality of the new order of life made real in the world through Jesus Christ.

Fourth, he shows that the sufferings that are permitted in the lives of Christians are for the purpose of developing them. He tells us not to think it strange concerning these "fiery trials" because they come to test us and are not an unusual thing. They mean fellowship with Christ in His sufferings and they are common to the brotherhood, and "The God of all grace shall through the sufferings perfect, establish and strengthen" us. That is, the life will be perfectly adjusted, permanently es-

tablished and strengthened so that it can constantly function normally. He understood this life with all of its experiences as a school for the making and developing of men and women in God's own image. In order to be like Him they would have to be free and also capable of sacrificial service. That means suffering. For the God that Peter knew and who was the heart of his philosophy was a God who was carrying out His program and realizing His purpose through very real suffering. True fellowship with Him would be impossible apart from a sob.

Fifth, on the basis of these facts his great message is "Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well doing unto a faithful Creator." This is a very significant message and an unusual insight. Men are to trust God and therefore commit their souls in well doing, not in indifference or idleness, but in constructive activity in line with the purpose of God who is "a faithful Creator." He is still creating in the activity in which the life is committed to Him. This gives us a most comprehensive conception both of God and of the trust in which men are to commit themselves to Him. He is still a faithful Creator, and still active in His creative work. His world is not done, but is in the process of construction. He is not apart from His world but active in its creation. The men and women who are a part of this world are also in the process of creation. He is active in shaping and forming them now. This is the kind of a world He has chosen to make them in. It

is very doubtful if He could make the kind of men and women He has chosen to make in any other kind of a world.

The important thing for us is that we should be responsive to His touch, committing ourselves to Him in well doing, trusting that He can shape us after the image of Him who has revealed God in the life that has come to be the standard shekel of the temple of human ideals. This gives life a comprehensive meaning, a worth while motive, and gives a sound basis for an optimistic view of the future. It not only enables us to believe that the future is safe but to feel that however hard the present it has a constructive value to our world and is a part of a redemptive purpose which has as its aim the emancipation of men and the establishment of righteousness. A motive like this makes men willing to suffer and sacrifice for the general good and produces statesmen and prophets who lead in the real progress of the world. Only a man who has absolute confidence in the morality of his world can be a real prophet.

This leads us to a consideration of the fact that this basis for faith and hope is not a mere other worldliness but a sound practical basis which is in line with some of the best conclusions of modern thinking.

The late Professor William James, in answering the question "Is life worth living?" says, "If this life be not a real fight in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success, it is not better than a game of private theatricals from which one may withdraw at

will. But it feels like a real fight—as if there were something really wild in the universe which we, with all our ideals and faithfulness, are indeed to redeem. . . . For my own part, I do not know what the sweat and tragedy of this life mean, if they mean anything short of this." How we may fall in line with the divine will and how in that submission God is able to work out His purpose through the "sweat and tragedy" of life, and how we become necessary to His purpose as revealed in Christ we may not know, but with Peter there is no doubt as to what is to be the outcome. There is a sense in which the victory is already won—with his conception of God the good can not fail.

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again,—
The eternal years of God are hers."

It is with this assurance that he encourages men to be watchful and steadfast so that they may not hinder God nor fail to do their part to hasten the victory. The man that loses out is the man that fails to fall in line with the will and purpose of God. God is constantly seeking to win men to submission in this sense. In this sense and in this sense alone He is "a struggling God." He is not a struggling God in the sense that there can be any doubt as to the ultimate success of His purpose. The proof that Peter gives of this is the resurrection of Jesus. He says that God raised Him from the dead "that our faith and hope might be in God." The struggle and the

sweat are essential to the kind of world God is making but He is a "faithful Creator" and Peter has no doubt as to the issues of His activities. Perhaps some might object to saying that "the struggle and the sweat are essential" to His purpose. If so we can go back one more step and say with confidence that the thing that makes "the sweat and the tragedy" possible is certainly essential. The thing that makes them possible is the freedom of man and that in relation with God is the heart of our world. Without it we could not have a world of beings made in the image of God. This in the nature of things carries with it, as David Cairns very well says, "A true self-limitation on the part of God." He adds, however, "The power to do this seems, therefore, to be involved in His omnipotence." But this is not the self-limitation of H. G. Wells' "Struggling God." Professor Tiele, in his Gifford Lectures (II 93), says, "It suffices for us to note the fact that man's religious consciousness has invariably caused the rejection of every system which limited the omnipotence of God in order that His holiness, righteousness and love might be preserved intact." God was able to make a world in which there would be no sweat and tragedy, but it would be a world fatalistically determined and could in no way rise as high as a world of free moral beings. Dr. Cairns quotes Dr. Iverach of Scotland as saying, "that it is a greater manifestation of divine power to make beings that can make themselves, than to make beings that can

not. For the former are men and the latter are puppets, and puppets after all are only things." That is another way of saying that God has made the greatest possible world but in doing it He had to take the risk of making men free and free men must live in a world of moral order. That means a world in which men are made by the education of experience. But Peter never lost sight of the fact that God is the worker—the "faithful Creator" who is making men through experience. This creative activity is not the activity of a spectator, but the experience of one who is suffering in and with His world.

Like John Stuart Mill some may feel the dark features and severity of the long-drawn-out process, but we may very pertinently ask as to whether moral beings could be created in any other kind of a world. We must not forget that our world is not a world of perfect men and women but a world in which they are in the making—a world in which through self-sacrifice and the giving of life for others men are coming to the truest and intensest realization of the self. How often in our own experience "if" in the words of Professor Bosanquet "we had our choice of pains, we should rule out our own greatest opportunities." Therefore, "Life's tragedy is not God's jest." In it God is working out a real issue. According to Peter in its agony He is making us "partakers of the divine nature." This is "grace" but it is a creative "grace" with a wondrous purpose and it is Peter's way

of saying what Professor Pringle Pattison, speaking for the most recent and deepest insights into life, put into the language of philosophy when he wrote "No deeper foundation of Idealism can be laid than the conception which Professor Royce makes the text of his latest book —the perception of the Spirit's power to transform the very meaning of the past and to transmute every loss into a gain, finding even the worst of tragedies the means of an otherwise impossible triumph. . . . This is the real omnipotence of atoning love, unweariedly creating good out of evil; and it is no far off theological mystery but, God be thanked, the very texture of our human experience."

The "evil" which we have in mind here is the suffering that comes to men who are endeavoring to do the will of God and subjecting themselves to Him in well doing. We are not discussing the larger problem of sin at this point. Yet, as we tried to show in a previous chapter, the solution of that larger problem is also found along this same line of reasoning. Professor David Cairns of Aberdeen, in a recent book, "The Reasonableness of the Christian Faith," says, "On the Christian view of the world the whole vast process of Nature, and of History, and of Redemption, is directed towards the making and the training of faithful souls who through death are born into that vaster life for which all things here are the preparation. . . . That through all the travail of nature, and through all the tragedy and comedy of

human life God is making a world of spirits to whom one day He will fully communicate Himself, and who shall be united in Him, is the final Christian solution of the riddle of the world."

This solution offers a challenge and a task rather than a mere enjoyment. It sets forth the kingdom as being above all a gift, but also a conquest. We are here to stand fast and fight the good fight rather than to have a good time. We are not only to think out, but also to live out the problem. This is done by a trust, which unites us with the invincible eternal God in Christ. This is what Peter calls "the true grace of God." Here again we find that he had a real experience that gave him a true insight that made it possible for him to lead the men of his day to face the problem of suffering on a basis that led them to a great constructive life that was very much worth while and a permanent contribution to the life of their world. What a tragedy that the writings of a man like this should remain largely appreciated only as the letters of an emotional, blustering fisherman and as a source of proof texts for certain phases of our theologies. A frank study of the great principles which underlie these admonitions and pleas will lead to the discovery of a comprehensive and burning message for the wounded hearts of men in a day when a disobedient generation has come up against "the flaming walls" of a moral world and men see life wrecked by sin and their dearest "lying dead in the house," a message that unveils

the heart of the world and makes possible faith and hope in God.

This message reveals the only adequate basis for the new world, and happy the men of this generation if they are true and brave enough to meet its impelling challenge.

CHAPTER XII

The Emancipation

From the "Fiery Trial" Peter's thought constantly turned towards the great emancipation and victory of life. That was how he thought of death and in that idea we find the key to his conception of the future life. That is a subject of perpetual interest. Men get away from it for short periods, but the tide of human interest always surges back with haunting echoes of a life beyond—

> "Thou madest man, he knows not why;
> He thinks he was not made to die."

The man who experiences the deepest things of life can not escape this thought.

One of the popular writers of our day says, "One of the most noticeable contrasts between this generation and those immediately preceding it, is the relative unimportance of the future life in the thought of the present age." But thought has changed in the dark days since these words were written. One of the books which has been most eagerly devoured by the masses in recent days is a book on the future life. Several editions had to be published within a year in order to meet the demand for it. We have good reason to believe that this change

was coming before the war broke out at all. The heart of humanity has refused to rest in a pure naturalism for any length of time. The outstanding thinkers in recent years were men who very definitely cleared the way for a more serious and spiritual interpretation of our world.

In France Bergson made a most effective protest against materialism. In Germany Eucken, with great insight and splendid persistence in the face of one of the most comprehensive and daring attacks of materialism in any age, asserted the reality of the spiritual world. In Great Britain, Ward wonderfully strengthened the philosophical foundation of belief in God and immortality. In our own country Royce, who was one of the most brilliant men of our generation, found in the constructive ideas of Christianity the crown of religious philosophy. Taking these outstanding men from the different countries as illustrations of what the real trend of our deepest thought was previous to the war we can confidently say that it was breaking away from materialism with its denial of a spiritual world. The secret of the reaction is found in the heart and nature of man. The very leaders among the philosophers of naturalism sometimes betrayed a restlessness which showed that they were men before they were philosophers. Huxley, although a pronounced agnostic, wrote to John Morley in 1883, "It flashes across me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in 1800. I would sooner be in Hell a good deal, at any rate in one of the

upper circles where the climate and company are not too trying. I wonder if you are plagued in this way." One of our own men, having quoted these words, writes, "Sooner or later either by personal experience of bondage to the fear of death or by insight into the sort of world which disbelief in immortality creates, most men reach the place where the possibility of believing in life to come is an urgent question with them." It is a more urgent question for our day now than it was when the above words were written—in many ways more urgent than in the days when Huxley expressed the deepest feelings of his heart. The question has been forced to the front in the thinking of all thoughtful men with tragic emphasis as the world has stood aghast in the presence of the most horrible slaughter of human life in all history. But it always forces itself to the front in men's truest and most sincere moments of thought. It would be strange if it were not so. Huxley imagines a man saying, "No one need tell me that the question of immortality involves great consequences for me now. I have stood beside my dead; I know. With increasing years I have thought of my own mortality and have considered with what irreversible steps I walk to my certain end. It is not easy to think of my loves vanquished, my ideals unattained, my memory quite extinct, and I as though I had never been at all. At times I, too, have brooded over our race, its mysterious birth, its long travail, its strange fight with sin and circumstances, and have wondered whether it can be that in the end there

will be nothing to show for all this struggle, aspiration, hope and sacrifice, except new worlds built from the ruins of the old, and in those new worlds no memory even of all that here was attempted, practically achieved, and at last utterly undone. No one need tell me that this makes a difference." All men must face these questions in some form. It is almost impossible to imagine a sane man not asking them at some time in his life. The greater the experience of life the more acute will they seem. The richer the content of the life the greater the demand for a reasonable consummation. As Lord Tennyson stood before the tomb of Wellington and thought of the magnitude and heroism of that splendid life he felt that there must be some way of crowning it beyond the crisis of death.

> "We doubt not that for one so true,
> There must be other nobler work to do
> Than when he fought at Waterloo."

This is the feeling that sweeps over the heart as we think of the great wealth of young life poured out in the recent world war. The flower of this generation in physical strength and intellectual and moral training faced the foe and "slipped within the shadow before they had the opportunity of drinking life's sweetest cup and raising up of their own flesh and blood those who could stand in the gap." It is when we face the question in pressing acute forms that we realize the deep sig-

nificance of Professor Hyslop's conviction when he affirms that, "The ideals of democracy will live with the belief in immortality." This suggests the practical value of the answer that men give to these questions concerning the future. When men answered them in a materialistic way the very foundations of empire began to quake. That is the great significance of Professor Eucken's message to his own nation before the war. He reminded men that "Voltaire's recipe—to work, but ask no reasons—would, if put into practice, degrade us to mere beasts of burden." He complained that "Our efforts fail to give life a content, and powers more particularly concerned with spiritual creation are most pitifully thwarted and depressed." We are feeling this at the present moment with growing acuteness. "A weariness of the world and a deep dislike to its limitations are becoming more and more general. We feel that life must forfeit all meaning and value if man may not strive toward some lofty goal in dependence on a Power that is higher than man and as he reaches forward realize himself more fully than he could ever do under the conditions of sense experience." "It is only as a characteristic expression of the spiritual life that civilization can have any inward coherence, clear meaning, and controlling purpose."

All this has been said in order to bring before our minds with real emphasis the fundamental importance of the questions of immortality and future life. Any man who thinks seriously and connectedly of life must face

them in some form. The man whose experience is most real and deep is the man who faces them in the most serious way. I am particularly anxious that this should be brought very clearly before our minds as we take up a study of Peter's attitude on "the last things" for we are constantly in danger of thinking that what he wrote and said was merely a reflection of the thought of his day and not great convictions gained in the fires of life and experience. We must again insist upon it that Peter was not a mere passive traditionalist who repeated the creed of his fathers by rote, but a man who passed through a transforming crisis that forced him to re-think his life from the foundations up. While he used the forms of speech of his day we must not forget that he passed through a spiritual and intellectual experience in which all things became new to him. Even the forms of thought borrowed from his past were re-thought in the light of his experience. To lose sight of this is to lose touch with him and to neglect the key to his teachings. This is particularly true of the subject now under consideration. It is absurd to think of Peter holding to the common Hebrew traditions about death and the life to come. To do so would be to fly in the face of ordinary common sense. The facts of death and the life to come were forced upon him in such a way as to make it imperative for him to think long and deeply about them. We can not conceive of a man like Peter doing that and continuing a mere traditionalist. Let us first glance at his experience with death. He was with Jesus when he

raised Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mark 5) and when the widow's son and Lazarus were raised (John 11). These experiences alone were enough to force him to re-think his ideas of death and its significance. He was also with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9) and whatever our interpretation of what happened there, if the records are worth anything we know that it brought the subject of death before Peter's mind in a very vivid and new way. Whatever his thought of death before that time, there he came to realize in a very real way that those who have gone before are not dead in the sense of being asleep or annihilated. Moses and Elijah, who had passed away centuries before, were still interested in the vital things of life. However this was made real to him, he came to see it in that way. They also talked about the death of Christ which was to take place at Jerusalem. That was a tremendously arresting fact in the thought of Peter. It was almost impossible for him to bring himself to think of Jesus as dying. He had other and vitally different dreams concerning Him. Judging from what he writes in his second letter this made a deep impression upon his mind. He did not understand its significance at the time but later on he had an experience that made it possible for him to appreciate its real meaning. Later he came face to face with the actual death of Christ. This must have been one of the most revolutionizing challenges that ever came to his thinking. During the days that the tomb in the Garden remained sealed death must have been the

main subject of his thought. Then came the resurrection of Jesus bringing life and immortality to light. Peter saw and talked about his own death which forced the subject upon his mind again and this time from a new angle. He must die. Jesus tells him so. It is impossible to think that Peter did not ask Him about death and its nature and meaning. We know that we have not a record of all that He said to him in those immortal post-resurrection conversations. It would be folly to assume that we do have. It is not reasonable to think that a man of Peter's disposition should be brought by Jesus face to face with the fact of his own death without asking any further questions about it. That certainly would be unnatural. In the face of these facts we can not for a moment think what he believed concerning death was a mere tradition. He faced the question in the throes of revolutionizing experiences and what he came to believe was a burning conviction. I am fully aware of the vexing critical questions involved in the record of these experiences. A discussion of them would be wholly out of place here. Suffice it to say that after the last word of reasonable criticism has been uttered there remains this fact which can not be dislodged: Peter and his companions were brought face to face with the fact of death in a way that wholly changed them and made such an impression upon history as can never be erased. It is irrational to think of a man of Peter's type passing through a crisis like that and remaining a mere passive traditionalist on the subject of death and the life to come. I

am reiterating this thought because a certain school of criticism today insists upon interpreting his teachings as though the most important factor in the determining of them were the teachings and traditions of the Jews. The important thing about Peter and his views is not that he knew the Jewish traditions; that is important and must not be overlooked, but it is not the determining thing in his thought nor the key to his teachings. The great thing is the experience which led to a break with Jewish traditions and theology and gave him a conception of life which was wholly different and for which he was willing to die. To miss that is to hopelessly misunderstand his teachings. Whatever he has to say on this subject is the product of a real experience.

When we turn to his speeches and letters we find that immortality is taken for granted on every page. Men in this life are "pilgrims" and "sojourners." They are merely passing through on a journey. That journey is to a real life—a life intimately associated with the life which we are now living. In it men are to be judged for what they do here. Peter had a very definite idea of the nature of death. It is the putting off of "this tabernacle." This phrase undoubtedly has reference to the body. *He* was to put it off. This was not the end of all things. He speaks of it as an "exodus," the very word that was used on the Mount of Transfiguration in speaking of the death of Christ. That meant an emancipation from straitened circumstances in which the life was hindered and circumscribed. It was also going forth to

something greater for which the life had been prepared in the Egyptian bondage. This is a beautiful conception of death. It is the idea which Lord Tennyson came to after brooding over the fact of death in a philosophical way for many years and embodied in the immortal lines:

"Twilight and evening bell
And after that the dark;
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

"For tho' from out our bourne of
Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."

The whole idea is the launching out of a personality on a larger and freer sea of experience. It is not a break with life but a crisis in which the life is freed from limitations and goes forward to the realization of the things for which it was intended. That is the fundamental thing in Peter's conception of death. It involves not only immortality but personal immortality. It is the perfecting, establishing and strengthening of the personality. This answers the deepest yearnings and questionings of the human soul. It affords full scope for the

most comprehensive thought concerning personality and the future life.

Nothing in the best thought of science and philosophy disproves this hope. Some one has said, "The fact that men like Sir Oliver Lodge in natural science" (and he might couple with that name the illustrious name of Lord Kelvin, who was one of the very greatest scientists of the 19th century), "Professor William James in Psychology, Professor Hermann Lotze in Philosophy, Dr. William Osler in Medicine have thought it reasonable to cherish hopes of immortality, suggests at once that while immortality may not be proved, it certainly has not been disproved. It is evident in view of such men's faith that nothing which science or philosophy has ever discovered necessarily prevents a man from a reasonable hope of life to come. Personal permanence is possible."

Professor James has very happily suggested that it is very much better that we should be the dupes of the hope that it is so than the dupes of our fear that it is not so. In this way he points out the way by which it becomes a "working philosophy." It certainly made possible a great and useful life in Peter's case. Some of the names quoted above suggest another interesting thing about Peter's ideas of death and the life to come. Whatever his belief concerning the possibility of communication with departed spirits he did not burden or complicate his teachings and messages with details. If there were anything of permanent value in this theory which is so popular at present it is reasonable to think

that Jesus would have taught His disciples concerning it in connection with the Transfiguration experience. We search Peter's speeches and letters in vain to find anything that would encourage us along this line. This is simply mentioned by the way. I have no thought or desire to discuss this very interesting subject in this connection. For the common man Peter gives an insight that is practical and sufficient. He believes that personality persists through the crisis of death; in communion with God it passes on to a larger and freer experience which is in no way a fundamental break with the past; but rather the logical development of it. That is fundamental and is in line with the truest thinking of our day and answers the deepest cry of the human heart.

"Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more."

* * * *

"For all we thought and loved and did,
And hoped, and suffered, is but seed
Of what in them is flower and fruit."

CHAPTER XIII

The Goal of History

To think of death in a vital way is sure to lead to a consideration of the destiny of the race and the goal of history. "In Memoriam" is one of the most interesting considerations of death in modern literature and it closes with these words:

> "That God, which ever lives and loves,
> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

When Tennyson faced the grim reality of death he could not help asking concerning the race's "long travail, its fight with sin and circumstances, and he wondered whether it can be that in the end there will be nothing to show for all the struggles, aspiration, hope and sacrifice, except new worlds built from the ruins of the old, and in those new worlds no memory even of all that here was attempted, partially achieved, and at last utterly undone." Out of all the travail of heart and mind he passed through there emerged a deep and abiding conviction that the world is controlled by a purpose in which it is moving to a definite "divine event" in which is to

be consummated and explained all the tangled web of life. This is the result of the most of the greatest thinking of all time. In fact, we might almost say that this conviction is inherent in human life. It is only by believing that truth and right are destined to triumph that man can persist in thinking hopefully and optimistically.

Therefore we are not surprised to find that Peter had very clear ideas of the goal of history. In all his speeches and writings his face is toward the future with confidence and hope. The deepest conviction of his life was that the best is yet to be. There is nothing more striking in his whole philosophy of life than his fundamental ideas concerning the future and the goal of history. Unfortunately the imagery in which he expresses himself has frequently been misunderstood and often developed into a theology that contradicts his real message on the subject. Whatever his dependence upon the forms of speech of his day, and it would be very unscientific to deny that dependence, it would be an outrage to ignore the fact that he thought this thing through in an experience that absolutely transformed his whole conception of life. His outlook on the future of the race was in harmony with his conception of death and personal immortality. Life in all its efforts, sufferings and cosmic crises moves to freer, truer and greater things. He never entertained the thought that the cause of righteousness could finally fail. He knew that it could be hindered, embarrassed and thwarted but not defeated. Hence in his outlook he was intensely optimistic. He associated the

consummation of the processes of this particular age with the coming again of Jesus Christ. That did not mean the end of things to him, but a crisis in which processes were brought to a climax and a readjustment in which righteousness would come to prevail. In light of the fact that there is much misunderstanding on this particular subject we would do well to note carefully some of the things that he does say.

Acts 3:19

In his second speech at Jerusalem he appealed to the Jews to change their minds concerning Christ and to "turn again" in order that certain things might be made possible. First, that their sins might be blotted out. Evidently their attitude and sins stood in the way of development. The things that would follow depended on the attitude they would take. It is important to note this because it makes very clear the fact that Peter had a due appreciation of the place of free will in the development of the world program which he had before his mind. Here he shows that God stood ready to do certain things providing the people would give Him a chance to carry out His program.

Second, that "seasons of refreshing" might come "from the presence of the Lord." This was to the end that their life be quickened so that their attitude and response might make possible the next step.

Third, "that He might send the Christ who is appointed for you." This manifestation is associated with "the restoration of all things." This is defined as the thing of which the prophets spoke, and is unquestionably

the golden age of the prophetic message of the Old Testament. There is nothing in this that would in any way indicate a break with the past. On the contrary the outstanding thing in it is that God is active in the life of the world, constantly endeavoring to get people to respond to His will and purpose so that He can fulfill all His plan for them and the world.

Later on in his life Peter was confronted with a problem that arose from this attitude and the hope that he preached. Certain men noted what he said about the coming of Christ and as the years went by and the promise was not fulfilled they became skeptical and sarcastic. They were men, however, "who walked in their own lusts," a rather significant fact. They sneeringly asked "Where is the promise of His coming—or presence?" They asserted that there was no change in things. "They continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Therefore, the inference is that there is no progress or process such as was involved in Peter's idea of a consummation in the manifestation of Christ. His answer to this criticism is very significant and informing. First of all he reminds them that things are not as they were from the beginning of the creation. He points out that great cosmic changes had taken place which, while in one sense our world was continued, in another sense made it a wholly new world. As a result of these changes he calls attention, in the second place, to the fact that the heaven and the earth that now are, "have been stored up with fire" (Am. R. V. margin)

and that that order of nature will contribute toward the action of judgment.

In the third place he shows that time does not count with God as it does with us. The dominating thing in His activities is not the calendar. He can quietly wait a thousand years as though it were one day or He can become mightily active so as to precipitate things and accomplish as much in a day as would ordinarily take a thousand years. The promise is not delayed because God has not sufficient power to carry it out. The trouble is not there.

Fourth, he reveals the determining element in the divine program and process. "It is not His wish that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The dominating element in the divine program is the saving and making of men. He does the thing that is most effective for that purpose. That is the realm in which we must look for the seeming indifference and delays of providence. He is governed not by the clock or an arbitrary program but by the needs of men. He does the thing that goes farthest in making men and women like Himself.

2 P 3:9

Fifth, Peter is very careful to show that He is nòt indifferent to His promises and that He has not forgotten the "divine event" toward which the whole creation moves. The day of His action shall come and from the crisis of His action there will emerge, "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." This new order will be an order in which men will be perfected,

established and strengthened. Not "perfected" in the sense that there is no further growth or progress. Not "established" in the sense that all things shall become static. There is nothing in his speeches or writings that would suggest this. On the contrary his whole philosophy is centered in the idea of a personal relationship that involves an eternal unfolding. This crisis associated with the coming of Christ is only one step in that unfolding and unveiling and it leads to greater and deeper experiences of eternal life. The perfection is the perfection of adjustment that makes possible normal and unimpeded functioning. The establishment is the making permanent a condition that will make possible unhindered progress in the divine will. Strengthened means that men will have power adequate to the realization of their ideals. He does this for us. Peter, like Paul, seems to be constantly conscious of the fact that it is God who is working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Therefore our hope is in Him. At the same time he never loses sight of the fact that He works through us and His program is conditioned by our response. He constantly holds in mind the human and the divine sides. The important thing for us to note here is that Peter is very clear on the fact that our world program depends not on blind forces but on the activities of a Person who is supremely interested in making men and women in His own image, and therefore in the making of a world such as will easily lend itself to the accomplishing of this sublime task. He works

in an orderly way and therefore not always the same. Differing circumstances demand different activities. Processes that have a definite goal in view must in the very nature of things lead to crises and climaxes. The climax of the harvest that leads to its harvesting is not an interruption of the processes which produced the harvest but the intelligent conservation of the results by those processes.

In the program of a Person who is intelligently carrying out a purpose there must be processes and there must also be crises. This is a phase of evolution that men have largely lost sight of in recent years. It has been largely viewed from a mechanical point of view. This point of view fails to do justice either to nature or history. In the very nature of things there must be a fundamental difference between the world of an active Creator who is still creating His world, and a mechanical world which has been created, set in motion and left to itself to unfold. While in the latter case we could reasonably tell what is going to happen and what is possible in the former we may always look for crises, new, different and greater things. The development is not the unfolding of a mechanical world but the carrying out of a program by an Experiencer who is greater than His world, and therefore master of it and able to adjust and manipulate it to His purpose. The world of an Experiencer who has the power of choice and the power to carry out His will must in the very nature of personality be a varied world. Not only this, but we must be

very careful not to press the analogy of evolution in nature and social evolution too far. In fact the analogy as frequently carried out in the thinking of scientists is a snare and a delusion. Progress in a world that is largely determined by the choices of many free beings must in the very nature of things be fundamentally different from progress in inanimate nature.

Peter viewed the world as the world of a free Creator who is seeking to make men in His own image and who in His program is moving through quiet processes, suffering, pain and great crises to the establishment of heavens and an earth in which righteousness prevails. It is worth while to say again that he is not thinking of a finished universe in the sense of a static universe in which there is no more chance of development, but of a readjusted world in which personality has full play and therefore fuller chance for development than under the obvious limitations of our present experience. In this connection he speaks in a prophetic way of a special crisis which he associates with the coming or manifestation of Christ. This is not set over against a philosophy of development but is a step in development and the culminating of the processes of a certain period or age. In fact he pled with the people of his own day to do certain things that might make possible the unhindered activities of these processes so that God in turn might make possible the culmination of them in the sending of the Christ. Let me insist upon it that this does not mean a break with the past in the sense that it is a rude

and unnatural breaking in upon the essential order of things. On the contrary it is a crisis which conserves the essential things in the past as the harvest crisis preserves the ripe grain which is the result of the processes which brought it to maturity. There is no contradiction between the process and the crisis. Therefore when we speak of "The Goal of History" in connection with Peter we have in mind the culmination of the processes of this present age in a crisis of adjustment which involves a special manifestation of God in Christ which issues in the triumph of righteousness, making possible a freer and eternal development.

This, so far as I am able to judge, is not contrary to some of the truest and deepest inferences of recent thinking.

First of all Peter recognizes that in the great crises of death and adjustment the good continues and is freed for greater development while the evil or the things that hinder are weeded out.

Professor William James, in speaking of immortality, says, "What Lotze says of immortality is about all that human wisdom can say, 'We have no other principle for deciding it than this general idealistic belief; that every created thing will continue whose continuance belongs to the meaning of the world, and so long as it does so belong; whilst every one will pass away whose reality is justified only in a transitory phase of the world's course. That this principle admits of no further application in human hands need hardly be said.'" Dr.

James Ward contends that against the continuance of life there are no valid objections to be raised. If humanity or society is an end in itself, "then the persons who constitute it must share in this end."

"All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour."

Second, Peter insists that the culmination of the processes of this age is to be brought about by the direct act of God in a new manifestation of Himself in Christ which will mean a crisis that will issue in a new order. This means that the action of God is essential to the realization of the new order and this action means a very definite and important crisis. This is the greatest need of the present moment. Men seem helpless in the grip of forces that threaten the very foundations of society. This is recognized by scientists and philosophers as well as evangelists and theologians. Professor Royce recognizes that the sinner can not save himself. "By his own hand he has banished himself to the hell of the irrevocable." In speaking of the loyal community which is to be the source of grace and of its origin he admits that it can only be by "some miracle of Grace."

Professor H. T. Mackintosh, the brilliant philosophical theologian of Edinburgh, says, "It has been objected that Christian eschatology must of necessity be in conflict with science. . . . It may be pointed out that the prediction of an unending human history is at variance even with the hypothesis suggested by astronomy, according to which our planet will one day be uninhabitable. But if faith declares—validly we Christians hold—that fellowship with God can not be broken by the death of the individual, it is equally within its rights in urging that the reality of the future kingdom is not affected by the coming annihilation of the race. . . . Nothing could be more unlike Jesus' thought than the hypothesis of a mundane evolution, moving to its goal by infinitesimal and homogeneous increments and completing itself in a certain form of specifically earthly life. For Jesus the new order comes from God, by interposition, when and as He may think best; the redemptive crisis is such as wholly to outstrip the powers of nature. Thus the idea of parousia recalls us to the divine omnipotence as the source of all hope . . . . . Complete Salvation can only be a new order from above."

Professor C. A. Elwood contends that in a world like ours we must expect certain crises in which there is seeming collapse and much confusion. Having called attention to what has happened in the present war and in other recent European wars he says, "Such facts are indications, to be sure, of grave social disorder; but such disorder may, to a certain extent, be a normal accom-

paniment of the profound social changes through which western civilization is now passing . . . . . our contention is that in passing from one type of social order to another we must expect a certain amount of confusion . . . . . It is impossible for societies to change their methods of living without some degree of confusion." This is another way of saying that normally in a world like ours we expect crises in development.

Professor Haering says, "Communion with the eternal God realizes itself gradually in divinely ordained stages of existence." Therefore he speaks of the second coming as "an actual end and an actual new beginning." W. D. McLaren, speaking of the possibility of reasonably harmonizing crises with what is vital in evolution, says, "The data are so largely unknown, and the possible combinations so infinite, that the rapidity of evolution might be accelerated to a degree hitherto little conceived, yet be in perfect accordance with the law of evolution."

This in fact is the basis of our great hope as we look out on the future in the light of recent events. We know that God has not necessarily to wait a million years to adjust fully our world so that peace and righteousness may prevail. That is the heart of Peter's message regarding the goal of history. As Professor Rauschenbusch says, "It is really an outline of the social salvation of the race." And as Professor Haering says, "The neglect of it is a sign of a faith that it becoming faint. . . . . Without this faith modern life with its special richness is specially poor." Professor Mackintosh asks what service

this conception to which Peter gives such prominence renders to Christian life, and he answers, "It has emancipated the mind from purely individual interests. It is to redeemed society, not to any single person, that the promise of the return has been given. When the second advent comes into mind, the proper object of desire and longing is not the lot of particular lives merely, much less our own, but the purpose of God to perfect His kingdom and glorify His saints."

CHAPTER XIV

Is the Theology of Crisis Philosophically Sound?

Peter's idea of the consummation of our age in the personal return of our Lord in power and glory is known as crisis or catastrophic theology and many think that it is philosophically unsound.

Professor McCown, in contrasting this view with what he calls the modern or evolutionary conception of the world, says, "The one view is evolutionary and naturalistic; the other catastrophic and supernaturalistic. The first holds that in the course of social evolution evil will gradually be overcome and more and more righteousness will come to prevail in society; the second that only by an intervention from without, a definite interposition into the affairs of men, which shall miraculously alter present conditions and laws of life, is it possible for the world to become better," and he contends that the crisis view here stated is philosophically unsound.

In order to test the idea it is necessary for us to get it clearly before our minds. Peter taught that righteousness was to prevail and be made the permanent law of life through a crisis in which all the processes of the present age are brought to a consummation through the coming of Christ in a new manifestation of glory and

purpose. This conception he undoubtedly got from Jesus Himself. He taught that the Kingdom is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went away. But when the blade sprang up and brought forth fruit then appeared the tares also. And the servants of the householder came and said unto him, "Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? Whence then hath it tares?" And he said unto them, "An enemy hath done this." And the servants say unto him, "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" But he saith, "Nay; lest haply while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, 'Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.'" He explained that the sower is the Son of Man and that the field is the world and that the good seed are the sons of the kingdom and that the tares are the sons of the evil one. He also explained that the harvest is the end of the world, or the consummation of the age. In the Olivet discourse He said this harvest, or consummation of the age, is introduced by His own coming again in glory. Our philosophy here is a process leading to a harvest crisis. This crisis is to be introduced by a personal return of our Lord. Professor McCown says that this conception is philosophically unsound because:

First, it is pessimistic as to the present earthly regime. It sounds the note of despair.

This is surely a most tragic misunderstanding of Peter's philosophy. There is nothing pessimistic about his conception of things. He never introduces the note of doubt or despair as to the essential issues of life. On the contrary, his outlook is most radiantly optimistic. This may also be said concerning the whole New Testament apocalyptic idea. It is most decidedly optimistic and hopeful. There is nothing pessimistic about the thought of things moving forward to the harvest time when by special action the sower becomes the reaper and thrusts the sickle into the ripened fields and makes provision for the garnering of the grain and the burning of the chaff. There is no hint of failure in the process that makes possible the harvest. The tares in the field are also carried forward in the process and they too must ripen unto the harvest and by the special action of the reaper be separated from the wheat and be disposed of according to his purpose. But the special action that takes care of the rich harvest is not a failure but a consummation which is true to life and purpose.

Second, it is deterministic.

There can be no reasonable question that is deterministic as far as the purpose of God is concerned. It believes that God is carrying out a very definite plan and that His purpose and will determine and condition nature and history. He is the source and sustainer of all things. In Him all things consist or cohere. But His

purpose includes free moral beings and their free will activities, but this freedom is obviously within a determined world. Men are free to choose but they are not free to choose to disrupt the world and its nature. We can choose, for example, to put our hand into the fire, but we can not choose what will happen to it if we do put it in. Every man must choose the way he shall go, but he can not choose what shall happen when he has made his choice. In this sense Peter's philosophy was deterministic. "Him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay." God raised Him up and loosed the pangs of death, but the lawless ones suffered the consequences of their choice to slay Him. The action of God in the harvest crisis shall be in line with the eternal purpose, but what shall come to individuals and nations will be determined by the choices which they will make during the summer of favor and loving care. This is the philosophy that governs us in our daily conduct and every day government.

Third, it is mechanically external.

On the contrary, it is fundamentally internal, personal and spiritual. Its world is a Christocentric world—God's world made, governed and held together through Christ. There is nothing mechanical or unspiritual in the idea of His special action in caring for that which He has sown and fostered. This is not a breaking into the world for the simple reason that He has not been outside of it. It is His and He is more than the world, but He can not

be outside of it. There is no outside or inside to the world in history apart from Him. Peter's whole conception of the world is that it is God's world and we have seen that this is in line with some of the deepest philosophical insights of our day. Its final relations are spiritual and personal and, therefore, there is nothing mechanical or unspiritual in an action that unveils Him in a new movement of love, consummating the purposes of His grace. The most spiritual thing in all the history of the human race is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and in that movement God manifested Himself in physical form. In the light of this fact why should men think of a second personal manifestation of Christ as mechanical and unspiritual?

Fourth, it is immoral.

On the contrary, it is essentially and fundamentally moral. A sowing and cultivating process demands a harvest. It would be highly immoral and unnatural to sow and intensely cultivate and then leave the harvest to perish. If God is purposefully and constructively active in the processes of our day, all sense of the fitness of things seeks a harvest, and a harvest demands a reaping action and it is difficult for us to see how the reaping action can be considered immoral simply because it is the action of the sower who planned and wrought for the harvest day.

We are quite willing to make the final test of this whole crisis idea the ethical test. Peter does not hesitate to make it so. "Seeing that these things are thus . . .

what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness." It ought to have a purifying influence upon the life and to give it nerve and confidence. This is the influence it had upon Peter and upon untold multitudes who through the centuries have fed upon his inspiring words.

I undertook to show that Peter was a man of remarkable experience and insight and that the fundamental principles of his teachings are in line with some of the truest and deepest conclusions of modern thinking. He put his thoughts into the language of the common man, but his insights were true to reality and for that reason he gives us a "working philosophy."

As a result of our study we have come to discover that his philosophy of life while simple is very comprehensive. Briefly stated it is this—This world is God's world and He is active in it carrying out a purpose which includes the making of men and women into His own image. To this end Jesus came, lived, died and rose again. In Him we have God and His ideals revealed, and through Him God seeks to reconcile men to His plan and reign. Through humanity's relation to Jesus, God is moving to the consummation of His purposes in a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. In other words, his philosophy is a theistic personalism centering in God as revealed in Jesus Christ and consistently optimistic throughout. While I have only touched the surface of this rich vein of truth I venture to think that I have discovered in

the teachings of the blustering, impulsive fisherman of Galilee rich materials for a working philosophy of life which are worthy of the careful attention of the most profound and best trained minds and, yet, are so simple that the common people will continue to read them with understanding and gladness.

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